

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



3 1761 04053 1022

JOHN M. KELLY LIBRARY



Donated by
**The Redemptorists of
the Toronto Province**
from the Library Collection of
Holy Redeemer College, Windsor

University of
St. Michael's College, Toronto

N. J. HORAN.

HOLY REDEEMER LIBRARY, WINDSOR

~~TRANSFERRED~~



~~TRANSFERRED~~

SERMONS
DOCTRINAL AND MORAL

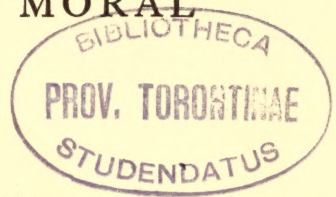


SERMONS

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL

BY

RT. REV. THADDEUS HOGAN, R.M.



BQ
2980
.H7



P. J. KENEDY & SONS

PRINTERS TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE

44 BARCLAY STREET, NEW YORK

HOLY REDEEMER LIBRARY, WINDSOR



Photo by Ziegler

V. faithfully yr. m. S.
Thaddeus Hogan
R. M.

Nihil Obstat

REMIGIUS LAFORT, S. T. D.

Censor



Imprimatur

✠ JOHN CARDINAL FARLEY

Archbishop of New York

New York, November 28th, 1915

52-0209

FOREWORD

No one who has kept in touch with these, our times, and has followed the trend of modern thought, but will welcome this volume of sermons, with their strong, sturdy, refreshing note of Catholic Faith—that Faith which cannot fail but bear fruit while the earth exists.

(Shadows may drift across the light; rocks may block the pathway; vapors may rise to obscure the end in view—but never in the Church Catholic. Not ours to know those shadows which our separated brethren have inherited; not ours to climb those obstacles which they must encounter; no mists cloud our vision, for the truth belongs to us, pure and clear and undefiled.)

We Catholics are aware of these things, but Mgr. Hogan, out of a varied and vast experience, knows better than most how to set them before us in a quiet, gentle, firm and convincing way. Each section of the volume is filled with grains of thought, gathered from the storehouse of a long and useful life spent in the service of God. To know God is to love God,—every sermon has been written with this end in view, and in such a manner that our priests will read with pleasure, and with profit too, for the author is above all, a theologian, a defender of Catholicism as well as a preacher on faith and morals. The Church has always suffered—first from man's brute force; then from man's vain intellect; then from the unrestrained passions of man's heart. During her ages of trial, even as to-day, she stands the true Spouse of the Lamb, gazing with pity on the world opposed to Christ. She is accused of bringing out her old and rusty weapons to fight new difficulties. "But what weapon has the Church ever used save that of Truth, which shall make mankind free? Or of Faith, which overcomes the world?"

The sermons presented in the following pages are on many and diverse subjects. They will make their own ap-

peal. The Church, her faith, her morals, her doctrines, her devotions, are handled as one would expect Mgr. Hogan to handle them. They portray the mission of the Bride of Christ, which is to bring the tidings of salvation to all men, a mission which she is destined to fulfill until the end of time when, as the author himself puts it, "Faith shall be no longer needed, but rewarded by the bright vision of everlasting Truth; when Hope shall be changed into fruition; and Charity perfected in the boundless ocean of God's love."

CONTENTS

PART I

ON THE CHURCH

	PAGE
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: ITS CONSTITUTION, ITS ATTRIBUTES AND PREROGATIVES	11
THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH	17
THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE	25
THE ENEMIES OF THE CHURCH	30
THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION	39
TRIALS OF THE CHURCH	44

PART II

ON CATHOLIC PRACTICE AND DEVOTION

PRAYER, THE TREASURE OF THE UNIVERSE	57
THE MANNER OF OUR PRAYER	66
HUMILITY	74
THE WORLD: THE ENEMY OF GOD. A LENTEN SERMON	78
THE VAIN PROMISES OF THE WORLD. A LENTEN SERMON	87
WHY WE SHOULD HATE SIN AND LOVE VIRTUE. A LENTEN SERMON	94
PENANCE: A SERMON FOR ASH WEDNESDAY	102
DEATH, THE END OF ALL	109
THE PASSION OF OUR LORD: A SERMON FOR GOOD FRIDAY	117
THE GREATEST GIFT: THE EUCHARIST	130
THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS	139
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	147
THE SANCTITY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE	156
LAWS GOVERNING CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE—HOW MARRIAGE SHOULD BE CELEBRATED	161
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. PART I.	171
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. PART II.	181

PART III

ON CATHOLIC BELIEF: FOR MIXED CONGREGATIONS

	PAGE
IS A MAN MORALLY FREE TO CHOOSE HIS RELIGION?	195
THE CATHOLIC PRIEST. WHO IS HE? WHAT IS HIS OFFICE?	213
THE HOLY EUCHARIST	223
THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, OR, CONFESSION	231
PURGATORY—PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD	240
INDULGENCES	246
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND THE SAINTS	253
THE MARRIAGE TIE	260
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND EDUCATION	267
INDIFFERENTISM	273
SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, SECRET SOCIETIES	277

PART IV

ADDRESSES

IRELAND IN ITS CHRISTIAN ASPECT, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CIVILIZATION. ADDRESS FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY	285
ON THE LAYING OF A CORNER-STONE	305
CLUB LIFE	311
MUSIC	317

PART I
ON THE CHURCH

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

ITS ORIGIN; ITS CONSTITUTION; ITS ATTRIBUTES AND PREROGATIVES

WHAT does the Catholic Church say of herself? Stand forth, O great and mysterious Catholic Church! Answer this solemn question. Stand forth and tell us who thou art, and whence thou hast come; tell us why thou art here; we call thee forth, not as Samuel called forth Saul from the dead; because we know, and every one in the world knows, that thou art living and strong, and vigorous and youthful, and mighty as a giant. We call thee forth, not as Jesus called forth Lazarus, nor as He called forth the daughter of Jairus, for we know that no winding-sheet was ever needed to enwrap thy body, for the simple reason that thou hast never died since thou didst first appear in the world twenty centuries ago.

We call thee forth as the most remarkable religious organization on earth, as the most trustworthy exponent of thine own doctrines, as the living witness of what they have been since the first moment of thy existence until now. We call thee forth, then, O Catholic Church, whom we find wherever we may go, overspreading the earth, encircling the globe, penetrating into the forests of unknown lands, claiming as thy children every nation under the sun; every clime and tongue; every race and color; claiming the Negro, the red Indian, the Malayan, the Mongolian, and the White; whom we find raising thy banner and symbol, the Cross, wherever thou dost set thy foot. Tell us, thou, whom we meet in every European land; throughout America; in darkest Africa; at the foot of the Himalayas, along the Ganges, the Chinese rivers, the wilds of Siberia, and down in the far-off isles of the South Sea—tell us, we adjure thee, in the

name of the living God, to answer this portentous question: Who art thou?

And slowly—solemnly—with majestic tread, the Catholic Church comes forth, bearing on her placid and queenly brow the laurels of the victories of nearly two thousand years. She comes, with a calm and composed look of conviction and certainty. She comes, with an expression on her countenance which signifies Faith, and Hope, and Charity. In a voice whose thrilling tones are well-known to all the world, because it has been heard for centuries, she answers. And these are her words. Hear them:

“I am the Bride of Christ. I am that mystic Spouse which, according to the testimony of the beloved disciple, came forth from the side and heart of Jesus in the throes of His death agony. I am that Spouse ‘whom He loved,’ according to the testimony of the Apostle, ‘for whom He delivered Himself, cleansing her in the laver of water, through the Word of Life.’ I am the holy city, the New Jerusalem, which was seen, says St. John in the Apocalypse, ‘coming down out of heaven from God.’

“I am that Society, that Church which Christ the Lord founded when He called the Apostles, formed them into a college, and placed Peter over them as their head. I am that Church of whom He said, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ I am that Church to whom He said, ‘Go forth and teach all nations—as the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you; He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me.’”

But tell us, mysterious Catholic Church, how can you put forth this extraordinary and exclusive right to be, in very deed and truth, that Church which the Apostles governed, over which Peter ruled, and which Christ the Lord founded? Has not every institution, every work of man, perished and fallen into decrepitude and decay? You are young! And yet you claim to be the only Church founded by Christ, while there are numerous other bodies claiming the same glorious inheritance.

She answers. Hear her answer: “Just as this nation

counts its years by the terms of its successive Presidents, just as this nation claims to be the very self-same nation and republic with that over which the illustrious Washington presided; so I, through the long and uninterrupted line of Popes, with every one of whom I was personally acquainted, and every one of whom left some words written on the pages of my history, to mark his day and his place in it, so I claim to be that Church over which presided Peter, the first Pope, and Linus next, and Cletus next, and Clement, and so on down to the present.

“Hence, I am the only witness in the world of the great mystery of the Redemption of man. I alone heard Jesus speak; I alone walked and talked with Him by the banks of the Jordan, by the shores of the lake of Genesareth, by the waters of Galilee. I alone saw His miracles, heard Him call forth Lazarus from the dead. I alone saw Him restore sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. I alone saw Him weep over the sins of men and rejoice over the innocence of childhood.

“I alone sat with Him at the Last Supper, and partook of the Bread which He held in His blessed hands on that memorable night, and blessed and gave to His disciples. I drank of the mystic chalice which He left to the world as the last pledge of His love.

“I alone, of all the world, stood by the cross, and watched His precious blood trickle down its sides. I stood by His new-made grave, watched for His Resurrection, and met Him at dawn in Galilee on that first Easter morning. And during the next forty days He committed to me various charges which I have since had to undertake and fulfil.

“Lastly, He gave me my full commission, and sent me forth into the world among men, when He sent the Holy Ghost upon me on the day of Pentecost twelve days after His Resurrection.”

But you are human! If you are human, why have you not had the same fate as all other human institutions?

She answers: Hear her answer: “I represent Christ, my Spouse, in this world. I perpetuate His Incarnation, and its beneficent effects. Christ was human, but He was not merely human, He was also divine, having the two natures,

the divine and the human, in one and the same divine person.

“So I, though composed of human beings, which are my members, am divine in my Head, who is Jesus Christ; divine in my life, which is the grace and the power He gave me, and divine in the Spirit which animates and dwells in me, which Spirit is the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

“According to the promise and words of my divine Founder: ‘And I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth . . . the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name. He will teach you all things’ (St. John xiv. 16, 17, 26). This is the secret of my life. This is why you find me strong and youthful and vigorous, yes, even more majestic than ever.

“This is why, at no period of my history, could the words of the great Protestant historian and essayist, Lord Macaulay, be applied with more appropriateness than to-day, when he says that, ‘My history goes back until it is lost, as it were, in the twilight of fable. I was great and respected before the Frank had crossed the Rhine; when Grecian eloquence flourished at Antioch; when tigers and camelopards bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre.’

“I am sending forth my missionaries now with the same zeal that I did St. Augustine to England, St. Patrick to Ireland; St. Fridolin and St. Boniface to Germany; and St. Columbanus to the countries of southern Europe. I am confronting hostile kings now, as I did Attila. I am stretching forth my hands to-day to guide and aid the weak against the tyranny of the strong and powerful, just as I protected the vassals of the feudal barons from the oppression of their masters; I am defending the honor and the virtue and the dignity of woman to-day, just as I did at all times in my career since the day that I raised her up from the degradation into which paganism had cast her.”

But, Catholic Church of this twentieth century, let us meet each other face to face. I adjure you, by the living God, to tell us how you can claim to be the only and identical Church founded by Christ, when so many other bodies around

you claim to be Christians and legitimate heirs to the same privileges.

She answers. Hear her words: "I am the only form of Christianity which has not been made by man. I have already told you how I was made and fashioned and sent out into the world among men by Christ Himself. No man, from the very first moment of my existence, has ever dared to question my origin or to suggest the name of any man as my founder.

"Every other form of Christian belief claims man for its author, and knows full well his name; knows the circumstances of his life, his works, and the reason of his projecting his new special form of belief. I possess every truth and every fragment of truth which every form of Christianity possesses, and over and beyond that, I possess other truths, equally sacred, which they have lost.

"Whatever they possess of truth they have taken from my lips and have kept of my teachings. I resemble in my career the march of a great army, bearing as most sacred the commission of its Commander-in-Chief from one point to another. The march is long and tedious and weary, and some grow tired and rebellious, and drop by the way; and some desert; and some go over to the enemy, and endeavor to betray the army into his hands. But the great body of the army is faithful; weary and footsore it may be, but conscious of right and the fulfillment of duty until the end is reached.

"I am that army. I set out on my journey on the morning of Pentecost bearing to all men the message of my Chief. The footsteps of my Spouse and Captain and Commander had scarcely disappeared from the earth when some in the ranks already began to rebel. And all along that weary march some have fallen and rebelled and deserted even to this day. First came those who, because of the superlative virtue of Christ, denied that He had human nature at all. They saw His life, and knew that of all the children of men who had ever come into this world, He alone could and did challenge them to convict Him of sin. 'Which of you can convince Me of sin?' He claimed to be God. They accepted the claim and acknowledged it, but

denied what was as essential to the Redemption, and what was equally true, namely, that He was man. Next came those who, while they acknowledged His humanity, denied He was God. They, too, fell by the way, and were left behind in the march. Next came the Nestorians, who denied the unity of the person of Christ; these were left behind. Next came the Eutychians or Monophysites, who denied the dual nature of the Redeemer. Next came the great Schisms of the East and the West.

"Time went on. I continued on my march, and lost few, comparatively, until the sixteenth century. Then occurred that revolt, which, of all others, swept away the greatest number of my army. But these, too, shared the sad fate of those who had preceded them.

"I remain the self-same, compact and strong as ever in spirit and in courage; gaining in numbers as the generations arise, and as men begin anew to see that I am the only custodian of Christ's teaching, and the guarantee of order, of law, and of happiness both here and hereafter.

"I am known among all men, because all those who belong to me are one in Faith, one in communion, one in doctrine, one in Sacraments, and in the mystic Sacrifice of our altars. One body, animated by one spirit, under one head and shepherd, and guided by one authority. The marks by which I am known and distinguished are so clear and so distinct and so entirely mine that I can never be mistaken for any other denomination whatsoever.

"The principles which guide me are unalterable. They are the revelation of God. They are entrusted to me—and while I guard them jealously, to change them I have no power. Political principles may change; the principles of natural science may change; the principles of social economy, all other principles in the world may change, but I remain the same, necessarily, the self-same Catholic Church. Founded upon a rock I was placed here for all time, and for all mankind, forever and forever."

THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH

THE Catholic Church tells us that she comes from God. She, and she alone, to the exclusion of all others bearing the Christian name, received the commission from Christ the Lord to be the custodian of His revelation and teachings. She, and she alone, was commissioned by Him to propagate these teachings to the end of time. Moreover, she received divine power from her Founder to aid men to put these doctrines and precepts in practice; to the end that they may be truly happy, both here and hereafter.

Let us ask and examine if this is truly so. Let us ask the Catholic Church to produce her evidence, in order that it may be subjected to the most rigid scrutiny.

First of all, however, let us dispose of what seems to be becoming a very popular error among people who do not belong to the Catholic Faith, *viz.*: "It does not matter to what Church you belong. We are all going in the same direction." Or (as I read once in a certain newspaper) as a popular evangelical clergyman said to a number of young men: "When you come before God He will not ask you what Church you went to or belonged to; but, what good have you done?"

Is this true? The Catholic Church answers, this is not true if the indifference is culpable. Faith is necessary; absolutely necessary, for, "Without Faith it is impossible to please God," and "He that believeth not shall be condemned." It would be true if Christ taught no doctrines that men should believe. But from the very fact of His teaching doctrines at all, it necessarily follows that they are to be believed. Otherwise His teaching was vain, extravagant, useless. Otherwise it were far better and wiser that He never opened His lips to speak to the children of men; but rather, that

He came and paid the price of our Redemption, and immediately returned to His Eternal Father.

To say this would be absurd and blasphemous. So it necessarily follows that Christ intended His doctrines to be known and believed by all those who would be numbered among His disciples.

If He desired that His doctrines should be known and believed, He must have established some means whereby the knowledge would be conveyed. These means must have been, either an individual, or a society, or a book. Not an individual, evidently, for otherwise Almighty God would be obliged to perpetuate the individual's life to the end of time. Not a book; impossible. Consequently, a society. And that society which He charged with this all important and divine work is called His Church.

That Church must have been furnished by her Founder with extraordinary prerogatives. For instance, she was to be for all men, therefore she must be such that nothing on earth, or under the earth, could overthrow her. She must be endowed by Almighty God with the power to tell with the utmost certainty, without any doubt whatever, what Christ the Lord wishes to be believed. She must be able to tell, accurately and at all times, whatever appertains to the welfare and happiness of man on his way to eternity. She must be able to answer all questions, at all times, to all persons, concerning man's relation to God—"He will teach you all things, and abide with you forever." And this without possibility of mistake—otherwise the case is as bad as if no such means at all, and no such institution of God, existed.

What are the evidences which the Catholic Church gives us that she is this institution which she claims to be? In order that we should be prepared to judge if the evidence is sufficient to establish her claim, let us consider what we should expect from such a society, on the hypothesis that Almighty God Himself was its Author.

We should certainly expect that it would reflect His own divine perfections and character, as being the direct and immediate work of His own hands. Hence we should expect it to be one. One in Faith, one in communion, because He is one. There is no unity so perfect as the unity

of the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons really distinct but one in substance, one in nature, one in essence, one in will, one in power, in glory, in knowledge, in holiness, and in every attribute of the Deity. A Church founded by Christ to perpetuate His doctrine and to propagate it, manifestly could be nothing else than one. One in Faith; for the doctrine of Christ is necessarily, of course, one and not contradictory, and, consequently, the Church which holds and teaches it must be one in Faith.

Now, in order to be one in Faith, it is necessary that there should be authority somewhere; for authority is the principle of unity. Hence all the members must be in perfect harmony of faith with that authority, in order that the faith should be one.

In the second place, we should expect the Church to be holy. Almighty God could not be its Author and Founder unless it were holy. And by this I mean that it should be holy in all its doctrine; that it should invite and lead its members to a holy life; and, moreover, furnish every one of them with the means to become holy.

Not only this, but it should also, at all times, furnish mankind with examples of holiness of the most conspicuous kind and character; of those who, besides observing entirely the moral law, aspire to the perfection of human nature by the observance of the counsels of the Gospel. Nor must there be wanting in it those extraordinary gifts and graces with which God endows some of His servants, according to His own divine pleasure.

In the third place, we should expect that the Church which Christ founded for the salvation of all mankind would exist in the world at all times, for all men throughout the earth. It is scarcely necessary to give a reason for this; for since, as we have said, it is for all men, therefore it must be in all places, and it must be at all times, otherwise it could not be equal to its charge.

Lastly, we should expect it to be the self-same Church as that of the apostolic age. There should be no period of time between that age and the present in which it did not exist. Otherwise, having once ceased to exist, it would

require a new foundation, and consequently would not be the one founded by Christ, but an entirely new one.

Now, let us apply this test to the Catholic Church.

Is she One? One in Faith and one in communion? She answers, Yes. And she is the only Christian denomination that claims this mark. No other form of Christian belief thinks it necessary that all its members should believe exactly the same truths. This is so true, and so admitted to be true, that every variety of belief and opinion is tolerated about the revelation of God. The Catholic Church alone, of all the Christian denominations, requires all who belong to her to believe the same truths, under penalty of absolute exclusion from her pale. To this end she claims to be endowed with authority to declare the truth, and having once declared it, all, from the first to the last, submit to that declaration.

Nor is this unreasonable. On the contrary, it is in perfect accord with the highest use of reason, and as we should expect. Now, to be in accord with that authority is to have the same faith as all other members.

This unity, this absolute oneness of Faith, is among her most striking characteristics. Wherever a Catholic goes, to any part of the known world, he finds himself at home as to his religion. Let him, for instance, be an American, a citizen of this Republic, who desires to make a journey around the world. Let him begin here, and travel through every state of the Union. Wherever he goes, he finds his coreligionists exactly of the same belief. Let him go down into the South American Republics and he finds himself among people entirely different from himself in everything except religion, but in that they are one. Let him cross over to Europe, and travel through the different nations and peoples that inhabit it, and wherever he goes, and no matter what may be the language, or how different soever the habits and customs of the people from one another's and from his, once he crosses the threshold of a Catholic church he feels he has come into his Father's house. There the worship is the same, the altar is the same, the liturgy is the same, the language of worship is the same.

Should he choose to continue his journey, and visit the

other portions of the world, Asia, Africa, Australia, the self-same experience awaits him. He finds the Catholic people believing the same truths, having the same Sacrifice and Sacraments, acknowledging and obeying the same supreme authority. He will find them one great family over all the world, under the paternal guidance of the same father; one sheepfold under one shepherd; one religious nation under one ruler; one body under one head.

Surely this is unity. This is the first evidence which the Catholic Church presents to us as proof of her title to be the Church founded by Christ.

Has she the second mark, Holiness?

Now, when I say the Church must be holy, I do not mean by that that every single individual in it must be holy, for we know, alas, too well, that that is not the case, and considering the weakness of human nature, never will be the case. We mean that the Church must have the principle of holiness in her so that she can never become defiled by wickedness or idolatry, as a Church. That she must always be what the Apostle called her, the Spouse of Christ, pure, chaste, without spot or wrinkle or any defect.

Is the Church Holy? She alone, of all the denominations, claims to be so. In order to justify the revolt of the sixteenth century, the leaders of the Reformation had to make the charge that the Church had fallen into error, and become immersed in vice and idolatry. Consequently, they did not, and their followers do not, claim holiness in their denominations as a mark of their inheritance of the promises of Christ.

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, points to every century of her life, and claims to be not only holy in her Head, and holy in her doctrine; but also holy in her Sacrifice, which is the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, every day mystically renewed; holy in her Sacraments, through which the grace of God flows into the souls of men; holy in the number of her children, who have given up everything which is prized by man in this world, in order to live for God, and for Him alone.

It is only the Catholic Church that teaches men to make sacrifices such as this. Everywhere else, men are satisfied

if they keep the Commandments: If, for instance, they worship God; if they keep the Sunday holy; if they are just to their neighbor, truthful and faithful to their obligations. But the Catholic Church goes far beyond all this. She tells men, if you really wish to be perfect, if you wish to follow Jesus Christ to the highest and most exalted standard of virtue which He inculcated when on earth, go out into the desert, and live there in silence and solitude, having abandoned all the goods and pleasures of this life. And spend your days in the constant contemplation of Almighty God and His perfections. And if at any time your lower nature should rebel against your aspirations after this perfect union with God, chastise your body, and keep it in subjection.

Where else on earth can you find the king and the noble and the scholar and the poet and the man of genius relinquishing the pleasures of life, and devoting themselves to work and mortification and prayer, except in the Catholic Church?

Where else, except in the Catholic Church, can take place such examples of self-denial and of personal sacrifice as are given by those sons and daughters of wealthy and noble families who turn from all the luxury of life, all the prestige and pomp of station, to enter religion? Voluntary poverty is madness, anywhere else. Perpetual chastity, which exalts human nature to the angelic standard, is not known anywhere else. Perfect obedience in everything that concerns life, apart from what would be sinful, is never thought of for a moment anywhere else.

And yet, following the words of Christ, the Catholic Church teaches that these are the Counsels of Perfection; and year after year thousands of her children, freely, cheerfully, and entirely of their own desire, undertake to observe them.

This is an example of the standard of virtue of the Catholic Church. I omit the fact that she also claims that the gift and the prerogative of miracles which Christ gave to the first Apostles has never been withdrawn from her; but on the contrary, as an evidence of the abiding interest and presence of the Holy Ghost, still resides in her, and will reside in her to the end of time.

On this evidence, the Catholic Church claims to have

the second mark by which she is and can be known as the Church founded by Christ.

Is the Church Catholic? That is to say, is the Church Universal? Is it spread throughout the earth? Has it been in the world since the days of Jesus Christ? To ask this question is to answer it. There are several churches right here in our own country—and some of you are doubtless acquainted with them—where, on any given Sunday morning, at one and the same time, and assisting at one and the same Mass, you may find the people of a dozen different nations, *viz.*, Germans, Italians, Poles, Schwabs, Russians, Greeks, Bohemians, Servians, Hungarians, Swiss, Bavarians, Austrians, Irish, Hollanders, English, Americans, and probably other nations.

If that complete unity in the worship of God under the guidance of one and the same pastor is not an evidence of the claim of the Church to be the Catholic or Universal Church, it would, I believe, be impossible to furnish one.

Lastly, is the Church Apostolic? That is to say, is she the self-same, identical Church which was founded by Christ on Peter as a rock, and governed by him and the other Apostles? The evidence for this is abundantly supplied in the fact that the Church traces her history in an unbroken line from the present Sovereign Pontiff back to St. Peter, the first Pope, Bishop of the whole Church, and Vicar of Christ. But what evidence does the Church give that she is in the world for the happiness of men, both in time and eternity?

The Church answers this question by saying, that from the very nature of the case, her purpose on earth must be solely for the benefit and happiness of man, as the purposes and end of the Incarnation of the Son of God and the Redemption of man were nothing else than the eternal happiness of man.

As to his temporal happiness: what organization, religious or otherwise, is more constantly engaged in promoting the happiness of its members? What phase of human suffering is there, which the Catholic Church has not undertaken to alleviate? What are the troubles or the miseries

of humanity that she does not undertake to assuage? to render their victims better able to bear?

In fact, she alone, among all the denominations of religion, does this to any great extent. Behold her numerous hospitals for the sick and the wounded; her asylums and homes for the orphan, the aged of both sexes, and the deserving poor. Her protectories and houses of refuge for the youth of both sexes, who are in danger of falling into the snares which surround them; her institutions for the blind and the deaf-mute, where they may obtain the means of making a livelihood; her institutions of learning. And who are they who are in charge of these institutions? Those who in their zeal for the honor of God, and for the welfare of their neighbor, have consecrated their lives forever to such works of charity, without hope of recompense, except hereafter. Those who, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, receive words of encouragement from the Catholic Church, and her blessing to follow in the footsteps of her divine Spouse.

Lastly, does the Church conceal, or try to conceal, her doctrine? Surely, dear Christians, when the Catholic Church gives evidence such as we have shown that God placed her in the world, and for such a purpose, there can be no reason why she should conceal, but every reason why she should make her doctrines known to the world.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE

IN ORDER to understand why the Church exercises her supreme authority to condemn errors and false doctrines, it is quite necessary to understand her language, her teaching, and even her genius, her history, and her customs. Just as it is most desirable and very necessary, for instance, that those who write or speak on the Constitution and the working of the Constitution of the United States, should know its origin, its history, and the genius of the country.

The Catholic Church has no difficulty with any one who truly and fully states the doctrines which she holds and teaches, but to this at least she considers herself entitled from every honest man.

Whenever you find a public man, and especially one who claims to be a minister of religion, make it his special aim to attack the Catholic Church, you may expect one of three things without any doubt: 1, He has some personal purpose in view; or 2, he is an intensely prejudiced person; or, lastly, and generally, he knows very little about the subject.

Hence we find so many false statements made about the Church and its teaching, and hence so much religious animosity is aroused. The best and shortest way to remove all such obstacles to the peace and happiness of social life is to know the truth always. In other words, be sure you are right when making a statement of Catholic doctrine, for it is quite easy to commit very glaring errors in this regard.

But, you may ask, has the Catholic Church always claimed the authority and power of accurately separating truth from falsehood, which she claims now? Has she always exercised and enforced this power and claim? And if so, who gave it to her, and why?

The Church, from the very beginning of her existence, has always claimed to have been endowed by Almighty God with this prerogative. Even in her infancy we find the exercise of this authority and power in the Council of Jerusalem, where the Apostles decided the question which agitated the early Church of those days, on the authority of the Holy Ghost and their own.

It has already been said that the Christian Church may be compared to a vast army sent by its Commander-in-Chief with sealed orders to a certain point. The army set out on the day of Pentecost with those injunctions. She is to complete her journey at the end of time and on the Day of Judgment.

Meantime, there is occasionally a mutiny or rebellion in the army. Some get weary, and create hostile camps; some drop by the wayside, tired and fatigued, and unwilling to continue the journey; but the army, in its great body, continues faithfully to obey orders.

Now, such has been, and is to-day, the Catholic Church. She received her charter from our blessed Lord Himself. He gave her what she calls the deposit of Faith, *i.e.*, that of truth, which He, the Redeemer, taught, and wished to teach mankind. He left with her and in her keeping the fulness of revelation so that she should be able to teach all men all truth at all times.

Now it can readily be seen that if Almighty God, Christ our Redeemer, desired that we should know exactly what He taught, and not *our notion* of it, it was proper and just and in accordance with our ideas and knowledge of God and His attributes that He should leave in this world an authority, sovereign, supreme, and perfectly fitted to say and teach what that truth or those truths might be.

The very supposition that God obliges us to believe certain truths revealed by Him involves the further supposition of a supreme authority to teach. Otherwise, the revelation would be worthless, and really unworthy of God.

But He left us the Bible—the Holy Scriptures! Certainly He did. But that is only a book from which we may deduce a multitude, a variety of doctrines, differing entirely from one another.

It is on this account that there are so many different denominations that one is amazed at their number, and at the same time amazed that any one should claim that the Bible is enough to decide the question of a revealed truth. From all this it may be judged that the reasonableness of a supreme authority in the Church, both to judge the truth and to command obedience, is absolutely necessary.

You see also that on the supposition that God founded and instituted the Catholic Church, just what you would expect Him to do would be to establish that authority within her pale. This is the authority which the Catholic Church claims for herself, and always has exercised.

Owing to the vacillating and fickle character of man's mind, it was to be expected that he would question the authenticity of the revealed truth left by Christ in the Church. And men did really question the revealed truths, one after the other. They began by denying the reality of the body of Christ. Then they denied His divinity. Then some denied the unity of His personality, they denied that He had two natures or two wills. Then they denied the sanctity of marriage, the eternity of hell, etc., etc.

All of these heresies, one after the other, the Church condemned by her supreme authority, and as other heresies and errors arose, we find all along, down the ages, that her action was exactly the same with regard to them. Until at length at the time of the revolt in the sixteenth century, we see her repeating the self-same thing in the Council of Trent. She condemned all the leaders with her anathema, and cast them forth as she had cast out, centuries before, all the early heresiarchs. All this she does and has done to guard the truth, the deposit of Faith.

Before the Ascension, Christ our Lord told the disciples that it was expedient for them that He should go; otherwise, the Paraclete would not come. But when He went He would send them the Holy Ghost, who would teach them all truth, and abide with them forever. And to Peter He said, "Behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (St. Luke xxii. 31, 32).

Here, then, is the origin of the authority which the Catholic Church claims and exercises in the condemnation of error and her teaching of truth.

For the Sovereign Pontiff, the Bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Christ, is clothed and endowed by Christ Himself with that sublime prerogative of authority whenever he teaches the universal Church on any question of Faith or morals.

The Church teaches that the Pontiff is endowed with this prerogative, and exercises it *only* when he discharges the office of sovereign teacher in Faith and morals. So that, consequently, the private opinion or teaching of the Pontiff, or his teaching on any subject except Faith or morals has nothing whatsoever to do with this gift of inerrancy. Neither has his private life or acts of whatsoever nature or character anything relating to it as deciding questions of Faith and morals. The Pope could do wrong, he could commit sin, but he cannot lead the flock of Christ, over which he is placed, astray by false teaching in the discharge of his office toward them.

The prerogative is given for us, not for him, consequently if he undertook to invade a country, no one would be obliged to follow him. If he undertook to say that the sum of three and three make seven, or that a square is round, or that the sun shines at night, or that the moon is made of cheese, no one should accept what he says.

It seems foolish to suppose such things, and one is somewhat reluctant to do so before people of intelligence. But such suppositions are made frequently. We are told, in so many words, almost, that because the Pope is infallible, we would be obliged to join the ranks of his army, if he could raise one, to invade America. What folly! How puerile such a statement! What a strange ignorance this shows of the teaching of the Catholic Church! Such language may not be malicious, but any person who assumes to teach ought to know his subject before he utters any statement calculated to deceive the unwary and to prejudice the minds of those naturally well-disposed to receive the truth.

The truth rarely needs argument—never abuse or calumny. It needs, in fact, only to be stated, for the well dis-

posed, in order to be cordially received. When one has to have recourse to misrepresentation in order to present a case, he must feel that his case is in a poor condition.

Honest-minded men and women would receive the doctrine of the Church if they really knew it. Professor Robinson, a convert to the Church, speaking of "the attitude of the educated Protestant toward the Catholic Faith," says, among other things, "Such persons need from us, first, knowledge, and not argument; second, the correct and complete statement of the Church's doctrine; third, this statement in language so simple and intelligible that they cannot fail to understand; fourth, this statement must be authoritative."

After this, it is only necessary to point out that no study, whatever it may be, concerning or relating to God, the Creation, History and Morals of Man, or the Ethics of Human Society, can be made without keeping in sight the revelation of God and the supernatural order from the dawn of creation to the present hour.

Any other hypothesis would be for a Christian a virtual denial of the religion which he professes, and is supposed to love and revere with all his soul.

THE ENEMIES OF THE CHURCH

THERE is no work, perhaps, of the divine Intelligence more deserving of distinguished attention, none which to a greater degree elicits admiration from man's mind, than the Church of God, the kingdom of Christ on earth, the Spouse of the Saviour.

Mystically begotten of Christ our Lord when His sufferings had reached their summit, emanating from His transfixed side in His very death-throes, it was nursed in sorrow, cradled in ignominy, and matured in persecution. According to the prophetic words of her divine Founder, she, like to Himself, was to be the object of the world's hatred. "If the world hate you, know also that it hated Me. You are not of the world, therefore does the world hate you."

But why be astonished? Was she not to perpetuate the work of His Incarnation? Was she not to continue that labor of love which He merited by His death and made God-like by His Resurrection? Yes, she was to continue it, not only as to the identity of the object, but also by the means which He prescribed and in the manner He apportioned.

When, at intervals, He gathered His little band of Apostles around Him, He did not leave them in darkness as to the future. He disclosed to them the mysterious designs of Providence in their behalf. He told them (and in them, His Spouse on earth) that they must drink of the chalice of tribulation, that "they would be led before princes and kings in testimony," that they would be maligned and persecuted by man, and that scandals would arise, even in the midst of that family which would constitute the household of Faith. For all this He prepared them. All this He disclosed to them, but in requital for their sufferings He gave them reason to rejoice.

Lest they should be disheartened at the prospect of bitter

trials before them, He encouraged them in those consoling words, "Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom" (St. Luke xii. 32), and again, "When they shall revile you and persecute you, be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven" (St. Matthew v. 11, 12). Again, that they might have no fear for the result, "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

And who that carefully considers the past history of the Church, will not admit that her life has been the realized truth of those prophetic words? Who will not say that her life has been one continued alternation of sufferings and triumphs? As the good seed, planted by the divine Sower, has she not had to grow up surrounded by noxious weeds, which seemed to threaten her with destruction?

She has survived in their midst; she has outlived persecution and heresy; she lives, despite the wounds received from the hands of her own children, in the midst of rationalism and indifference; in the midst of secret conspiracies, forsooth, for her destruction, and despite the foolish attempts of an infidel press to cast aspersion on her venerable years, and degrade her in the eyes of men. She lives, I say, despite all this, and will continue to live, until that dread time when the angels of God shall go forth and collect the scandals from her midst.

That she has unswervingly carried on her labor with undiminished vigor and zeal, now suffering, now triumphant, a little examination of her past history will testify. Go back to the days of her infancy, when as yet the footprints of Our Lord were traceable on earth. Those days, when her Founder, after having been entombed by His murderers, was derided and scoffed at; when it appeared to them that His memory was buried with His lifeless body, and that His name would be a mockery to posterity. What is it we find?

Even here, by His glorious Resurrection, does He prove to the world that His work would not be subject to human decay. At His Resurrection the lamp of faith was lighted in the world, never to flicker to the end of time. In His Resurrection the Church gained the first of that series of triumphs, one or more of which belongs to almost every age

of her existence. His Resurrection was a proof of His power, as it was an earnest of His promises.

The second period of suffering and subsequent triumph occurred when He had already returned to His Father. He had left her as to His visible presence, but He was with her, directing and assisting her by His Holy Spirit. The multitudes that flocked to become members of her communion through the preaching of the Apostles, increased almost beyond number. "Thousands believed, and were baptized" daily, until at length the Roman Emperor (Nero), fearing that her progress would be destructive to his ambitious views, determined to arrest it by persecution. Accordingly, the Roman Senate assembled, and took counsel as to what seemed the most expeditious means of destruction to Christianity. They strained every nerve, and tried every means which human ingenuity could invent to exterminate the Christian name. They made use of promises and threats to make the Christians apostatize; they made use of the rack, the scaffold, of fire and sword and torture of every description, to induce their return to paganism.

And what was the result? History tells us, but who can read it without emotion, or describe it with justice? Who shall recount the suffering of those thirty Sovereign Pontiffs, who nurtured the Gospel-Seed, even in their life-blood? Of those saintly bishops, who like true pastors, laid down their lives for the salvation of their flock? Of those thousands of holy priests, who sealed their faith with their blood? Of that countless multitude of the Christian family who had no alternative but idolatry or an ignominious death? Of those young men and maidens, who poured forth their blood and received the martyr's crown? Of those aged parents and young children, who, side by side, were led to slaughter, and with supernatural fortitude witnessed one another's death? Who, I say, can faithfully narrate the sufferings of those countless victims? We can only say that their torturers indulged, even to intoxication, their savage thirst for cruelty. Every footprint was sanctified by the ashes of some servant of God, who suffered for his faith, and now wears a crown of imperishable glory in the kingdom of heaven.

Thus was the seed of the Gospel sown amid the cockle of

the world's passions and prejudice. Thus was the Spouse of the Lamb nursed in tribulation, which lasted for three centuries, from Nero to Diocletian, with only short intervals of peace and rest. Thus did the world a second time exult over what they thought the extinction of the Christian name. And a monument was erected to the two last persecutors to perpetuate the remembrance of their apparent victory!

But how truly does the Psalmist say that "He who dwells in the heavens laughs His enemies to scorn." Now was the time for divine interference. Now did the Almighty prove that His Church was not of human invention, but a city, "whose foundations are in the holy mountains." Now He verified His word that He was faithful in His promises, "and was to abide with His Church."

Even when exultation over her death was highest, she came forth, as it were, from her ashes, like the fabled Phoenix of old, and proved her divine origin by her resurrection. She came forth, weakened, it is true, after her long suffering. In the words of inspired Wisdom, "She went up from Esdrion with her garments dyed red, but leaning on the arm of her divine Spouse." For Constantine, who was at this time young in imperial authority, was miraculously converted to the Christian faith, and was the means of having it propagated throughout his empire.

Behold, then, the second glorious triumph of the Church! From this time her position began to be one of authority among the nations; she sat in council with them, and they bowed to her supreme wisdom. The words of prophecy were fulfilled in her: "The kings of the earth shall minister to thee; and the children of them that afflicted Me shall come bowing down to thee, and all that slandered thee shall worship the steps of thy feet" (Isaias lx. 14). Emperors, kings, and princes acknowledged the supremacy of Christ's Vicar, and prostrated themselves before him when they received their royal crowns from his hands, and submitted their mutual differences to his decision.

But the Church of God suffered persecution, not only from those who never bowed their necks to her sweet yoke, but also from those whom she nourished at her own breast.

The divine Founder had said that scandals would arise; and after Him, St. Paul declared that, considering human infirmity, it was necessary that schisms and even heresies would exist. Hence from the beginning she has had to war against the misguided attacks of wayward children. From the day that Simon Magus rebelled against her divine authority, to the days in which John Wesley and John Knox extemporized new doctrines, error has succeeded error, and heresy has followed heresy, until their number has become as great as their existence was short-lived. They arose from pride or from passion; they pandered to the desires of men, and thus gained an apparent hold for a short time, but gradually returned to him from whom they issued.

Such were the doctrines of Ebion and Macedonius, which were taught in the first ages; such was Arianism, which at one time was so widespread that St. Jerome tells us the "earth groaned beneath its weight;" such was Nestorianism, which followed in its wake, and denied the prerogatives of the Mother of God, but received its death-blow at Ephesus; such was the teaching of Eutyches and Pelagius, which met the same fate as its predecessors. Such was every doctrine that ever opposed the teaching of Jesus Christ. Unable to bear the light of truth, its flame flickered and died, never to be rekindled, while the Church of Christ sent forth its light with undimmed brightness, even as at its birth.

But what shall we say of those heresies of later years, which would presumptuously attempt to reorganize the Church of God? Has the fate of these been better than those of past ages, or shall she be victorious over them, even as over those others? Yes, she has been victorious; she is victorious, and she shall be yet more victorious.

From the first moment that they were marked by the seal of her curse at Trent, they have assumed every possible phase, until they can be no longer traced to any other source than the clouded imagination or diseased mind of their individual professors: Without foundation, other than self-will; without recommendation, save that they suit pleasure. There is no one a Lutheran now as Luther was, no one a Calvinist as Calvin was, no one a Methodist as Wesley was. But each becomes his own teacher and follower, until a

confusion is produced like to Babel when it was cursed of God.

Remark the position of the Church of Christ against these domestic enemies. You shall find that she has always defined truth and condemned error; and when entreaties have failed to recall her erring children to her mother's care, she cuts them off from her communion, even though she does so in sorrow. This has been her action from the beginning. With the same divine authority she defines truth, and condemns and cuts off heresies, even as at Jerusalem when Peter presided at the Council, and at Nice in the fourth century.

Protestantism, carrying her malediction in its wake, has been inadequate to its supposed end, and bears explicit evidence of its approaching decay. For a time it was sustained by fire and sword, but even then unable to resist the "sword of the Spirit," which is the Word of God, it could not succeed in obtaining a place in the hearts of those who loved God more than themselves, and their salvation more than the paltry gain of pleasures of the world.

Thus its supporters had to abandon the contest, and acknowledge the superior innate power of the One, Holy, Catholic Church. And to-day, Protestantism, endeavoring to regain strength by assemblies and conventions, finds that disagreement and abortive efforts to unite bespeak the folly of its adherents.

Yes, truth is one, everlasting, eternal, whilst error perishes with the lapse of time; and this is the great, the final reason why the deposit of Faith, the Church of God, remains intact amidst the universal ruins of heresy. Behold then, the sufferings of the Spouse of the Lamb, but observe also her subsequent triumph over her enemies.

The third description of the weed symbolized by the cockle mentioned in the Gospel, amid whose poisonous influence the Gospel seed grows, is secret societies.

Like to their master, who sometimes has the appearance of an angel of light, they wear before men the garb of benevolence and charity, while beneath this garb they carry the dagger of destruction. They are afraid to plot their

schemes in open day, but, verifying the Saviour's words, they devise them in the darkness of unlawful secrecy, "For the evil-doer works in the dark."

These are not the least injurious. Having the semblance of good, they allure well-meaning men, from whom they secrete the truth of their designs, until they become impious and infidel; until they deny the authority of God and of His Church, and are prepared to barter their eternal welfare for temporal gain.

What persons compose them? Are they not the infidels who stifle the voice of conscience, and disavow the eternal God "whose glory the very heavens proclaim"? Are they not of the Jewish race, who, like their fathers of old, reject the revealed truths of Jesus Christ? Are they not the Universalist, the Pantheist, the Deist, and the sectarians of every description who quarrel among themselves and make a lie of the truth of God?

Are they not the bad Catholics who never bend their knee in the Tribunal of Penance, and who say they do so to make a decent livelihood? And what, let me ask, can be their real object? Their object, dearly beloved, is the same as Voltaire's was, that notorious infidel and a member of their body, who foolishly boasted that he would undo the work of Christ and His Apostles, but who perished in disgrace. Their object is evident from the addresses of their masters, who compare the work of their society with the work of the Church of Christ.

They try to make a religion of reason, as did the French Revolutionists; if one is allowed to speak so, they have their high-priest, their own rites, and ceremonies, their own ritual. Their religion is Rationalism, and its teaching infidelity.

Behold, then the next enemies of the Church of God; but mark how, guided by His divine Spirit, she has stamped them with the impress of her curse, and cuts off from her communion those who join in their associations. She has to do battle with them from without, but, thanks to God, they have effected little among her children.

The last and one of the most bitter of her enemies is an immoral and infidel literature. Stealing into the bosom of the household, and gnawing at the very vitals of Faith

and morals, it is productive of more or less evil. The one, under a pretext of denouncing vice, instils its poison almost imperceptibly, while the other, taking a more diabolical course, scoffs at the truths of God, and watches every opportunity to calumniate Christians, and to publish the scandals of individuals who disgrace their religion.

Parents, heed the warning of the Church: let no such vile productions, whether in paper or book form, get access among the little ones of your household. We confess all are not saints in our midst; we confess that from the beginning there have been bad Catholics; but is it not to this very sinfulness of a few that our enemies owe their origin? Where would the doctrines of the Reformation be for the last three centuries, did not Luther and Calvin and Melancthon become bad men, and even recreant to their sacred calling? Where would the Anglican heresy be had not Henry become the slave of licentiousness? Hence, as it would be unjust to taunt a good mother with the acts of a bad child, so is it unrighteous to attribute to the Church of God the evils of her faithless children.

And now that we have enumerated the principal enemies of the Spouse of Christ, and shown as best we could her unvaried triumphs, what shall we say of her present and her future?

We are almost awe-stricken as we contemplate her. Presenting herself to our minds like to a Queen in splendor, she exhibits her wounds, but they are a testimony of her fidelity and patience. She wears on her brow the bright crown of twenty centuries of martyrdom. She is clad in the royal robe of authority. She has truth for her scepter, the talisman of many victories, the pledge of everlasting life.

She is old, but because of her age, we venerate her the more, and though venerable in years, she "grows young, like the eagle." Her kingdom, undiminished by the ravages of time, is becoming more and more extended every day. Individuals and peoples may drop off, but she continues to advance with steady pace, until the limits of her authority are coequal with the limits of the earth. Verily has her divine Founder fulfilled His promise that "For thou shalt pass on to the right hand and to the left, and thy seed shall inherit

the Gentiles, and shall inhabit the desolate cities" (Isaias liv. 3). Like to the mustard seed beneath whose matured branches the birds of the air were sheltered, she shields beneath her protecting hand the children of every nation, clime, and color.

And she bears no evidence of decay—so that we do not wonder that some of her bitterest enemies, as Leibnitz, the philosopher, should acknowledge her as a wonder in the world, or should speak of her in those beautiful words which Lord Macaulay was forced to express of her, in very admiration: "The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of the Sovereign Pontiffs."

The Papacy remains, not in decay, not in mere antiquity, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth zealous missionaries to the furthest ends of the world. Nor do we see any sign or indication that the termination of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we need no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all.

"She was great and respected before the Saxon set foot on Britain; before the Frank had crossed the Rhine; when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch; when idols were still worshiped in the temple at Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruin of St. Paul's." Behold then the miraculous preservation of the seed from the cockle of the world's hostility; behold how the Church of Christ is saved from the perils which surround her!

Children of the Spouse of the Lamb, be faithful to your venerable Mother. Obey her voice. Observe her precepts and her counsels with filial affection. Thus you shall secure her protection, her benediction in this life, and a place among her glorified children in heaven. A blessing I sincerely wish you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION

ONE assertion made by the enemies of the Church and continually flaunted before the eyes of the public is that she is the foe of civil institutions, especially those we have here in our own country. Yes, these people will calmly tell you that "The doctrines of the Catholic Church are opposed to the welfare and advantage of human society."

A brief examination will show very conclusively how false this is. It will show that the Church, while she must, as the essence of her life, teach the truth and condemn error, yet, being the Spouse of Christ, the Prince of peace, she seeks to promote the peace and welfare of mankind both in time and in eternity.

Hence her methods are not violent, abusive, or disrupting. On the contrary, they are gentle, peaceful, persuasive, conservative. Trusting with perfect confidence in the final triumph of the truth which she is conscious of possessing, she is satisfied to bide her time, and to leave to the calm dispassionate judgment of those who are not within her pale, the authenticity of the claims which she puts forward to be the oracle of God to men.

There is a great pleasure in explaining the doctrines of the Church. There are so many who know nothing about them, and who have no opportunity of knowing them, and who are really anxious to know them, that it is a privilege as well as pleasure to be the medium of conveying this knowledge. Consequently, one must not complain, even if the occasion arises from the fact that we are abused or misrepresented, if we only have ample opportunity to demonstrate that fact.

A strange thing—and one that is hard to account for—is how apparently sincere and honest-minded people can go for a knowledge of the Catholic doctrine to a man who is its

enemy, and whose stock-in-trade chiefly consists in abusing the Pope, denouncing the Church or some of its doctrines, without even a moderate knowledge of what he is talking about. People do this at all times, even where there are priests on every side who would be only too rejoiced to explain the true belief of the Catholic Church.

Itinerant evangelists, as they are called, and sensational preachers who desire to be popular and make a good living, deal in this kind of slander. But those who preach what they believe to be the Gospel and the truth, regardless of personal considerations, are never found abusing the Catholic Church. They do their best, as far as their lights will allow them, to propagate the truth and to lead men into its paths without abuse or offence.

Who, I ask, has ever heard of a Catholic priest preaching on "The Genesis of Methodism," "The Anomaly of Its Order of Bishops," or "The General Results of a Well-Attended Camp Meeting"? The Catholic priest preaches the doctrine of the Catholic Church; he explains it, and gives the reasons and grounds on which it is founded and taught. He is satisfied to leave the result to the honest intelligence of each individual, and to the grace and goodness of Almighty God.

But the priest has still further to defend himself and the Church from the attacks of every demagogue and moun-tebank and illiterate person that thinks he can use the prejudices of people to make a living by calumny. There are persons in the world upon whom the presence of the Catholic Church has the same effect as the presence of her divine Founder had on the energumens of His missionary days.

Those sensational preachers and evangelists who have no good tidings to carry, except abuse of the Catholic Church, are very much like the poor—they are always with us—and we must expect to have them as long as people have prejudices and are unwilling to learn the truth. Therefore, we must be patient; they are at least good to exercise our patience. They will help us to be better Christians. But we have to confess that we have other means also whereby to exercise our patience. Wild animals could serve the same purpose.

Let us pray for those people who hate us so much, that

they may be able to see how much we desire that they should know fully, and entirely, everything that the Catholic Church teaches, in the hope that the bright and splendid light of divine truth may do with them as it did with St. Paul on his way to Damascus, when he went, emitting from his very soul (though, as he acknowledged afterwards, in ignorance) purposes of destruction and carnage.

Now you will readily admit that unless the Church of God surrendered her divine charter, and declared herself to have been deceived, instead of having been set here in the midst of the world and mankind by the power and authority of God, she is certainly obliged to condemn, if obliged to condemn any error at all, the statement that her doctrines are opposed "to the welfare and advantage of society."

Why should she be considered hostile to man's welfare, either in time or eternity?

What constitutes the happiness of man and of society, both in time and in eternity? I think I am safe in saying virtue, and virtue alone. The philosopher-poet has said:

Know then, this truth, enough for man to know,
Virtue alone is happiness below.

All men who merit one moment's recognition of their judgment, even excluding their religious belief, are at one in saying that virtue is the highest aim of life in this world. That is to say, men must be just, they must be charitable, they must be mild, meek, patient, forgiving. They must, in a word, show forth in their lives all those qualities and attributes which make life really desirable, admirable, and beautiful. They must love noble principles, and practice them.

Not only does the Catholic Church teach and insist on the necessity of the supernatural and divine virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, as well as of the moral virtues, which are included in the very idea of the Christian life, but she also inculcates the natural and civic virtues which must constitute the foundation for the supernatural edifice.

Hence she teaches prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, both natural and supernatural. She consecrates the civic virtue of patriotism by elevating it to the plane and

dignity of an obligation of conscience, enlightened by faith. She seeks to elevate the tastes and habits of men whenever she is not obstructed by the secular arm and jealousy of the civil power.

Has not this been her work since she first appeared in the world? What other power except the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church gave to the world the Christian civilization which superseded the pagan, and still exists to exalt men above nature, notwithstanding all the difficulties it has to contend with; and the terrible dangers that threaten it on every side at this hour?

Who was it that subjugated the wild West Britons, the Angles, the Saxons, and the fierce Northmen to the mild yoke of Christian discipline? Who gathered them together and framed and gave them laws, and made them nations, and taught them the sciences, and the arts of peace instead of war?

Who was it that rescued Europe from destruction, and saved, from the awful march of the Goths, the Vandals and the Huns, and preserved, burning bright and brilliant, the lamp of science, which these hordes did all in their power to extinguish? Answer, History, speak out boldly, and say that it was the Catholic Church, and she alone!

And yet she is told that she is an enemy to the welfare and the advantage of human society!

Who have been the greatest theologians, the greatest philosophers, the most learned men in every department of knowledge, human and divine, that the world has ever known? Were they not her children? Who taught the fierce barbarians, who is teaching them to-day the mechanical arts, and even how to labor? I answer, without fear of contradiction, the Catholic Church, and she alone.

Who gave to the Christian world the splendid results of Christian civilization, except her children? No others equalled them in the example they set of self-denial and labor for the benefit of the race. No others equalled them in the perfection they acquired in those arts which are called "fine."

They chiselled the human form out of the hard marble block, with such a closeness to nature and reality that it

seemed only to need a voice. They raised heavenward the finest architectural works of the pagan age; they put upon canvas exalted figures of the Redeemer, His holy Mother, and the saints who followed in their footsteps, with such a lifelike expression that one look was enough to inspire the beholder with awe, with reverence, and with a desire to imitate them in virtue.

And yet, after such a history for the benefit of the human race, we are told that the Church is the enemy of civilization! Oh, great and glorious Catholic Church! we turn to thee as our Mother, and the greatest Benefactor of mankind! We bow down before thee for thy years, and the glorious deeds thou hast performed for all men. In the words of a great Protestant historian, "Thou hast seen the rise of every institution of power and of empire in Europe, and in the Christian world, and thou art destined to live to see the end of them all, for thou art for all time."

And thou shalt continue in thy peaceful course until the end of time, going on and conquering and to conquer, until the day that thy divine Spouse and Head, Jesus Christ, shall summon the whole race before Him to be judged; and having separated the tares from the wheat, shall gather into His heavenly granary those who have heard thy voice, and loved justice, and hated iniquity.

TRIALS OF THE CHURCH

“You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you. . . . If you had been of the world, the world would love its own, but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (St. John xv. 16, 19).

THESE words are taken from the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John the Evangelist, which narrates the prayer of Our Lord and His last address to the assembled Apostles before His betrayal. They are the words of everlasting Truth, of the Incarnate Wisdom of God, at the most solemn hour of His life. He was preparing them for the great work which He had begun, and which they were to continue in His name unto the end of time.

At that solemn hour He took away whatever of delusion might have remained in their minds as to the nature of that work. He told them that though He had chosen them from the world, yet they were not of the world. That the doctrines which they had to preach, and the principles which should guide their lives were the direct opposite of the doctrines and principles of the world: that, in a word, they must be the enemies of the world from the very nature of the work to which He had called them.

The prayer which welled up from the heart of Jesus Christ on that memorable occasion was directed to strengthen His Apostles, to unite them, that, one in faith, and united in charity, they might present an unbroken front to the enemy.

Keeping the fixed principle contained in the words of her divine Founder before our eyes, we can, with unshaken confidence, closely study and have no difficulty in understanding the philosophy of the life and history of the Church of God. She was sent among men to restrain the passions of men, and therefore can expect or receive naught else but

hatred, opposition, and persecution from those who are unwilling to have their passions controlled, or who deny her right to speak to them in the name of God.

Without the light of these prophetic words of the Lord, civilization and liberty, so much the boast of our age, would be shocked and scandalized by the scenes witnessed and the crimes committed in their name throughout the world of to-day. But here we have the key to every outrage and insult offered to Christianity, the key to every persecution of which Almighty God permitted the Church to become the victim. Appealing to it, we can never be deceived by the tactics of the enemy, no matter how cunningly devised, nor surprised out of our confidence by the vain display of brute force, no matter how powerful it may seem for the moment.

In examining the history of the Church, we find that the manner in which she has been persecuted always arose and took shape from the predominant tendencies of the age. The spirit of evil made use of his instruments according to the mold in which they were cast.

Hence, the death of the Son of God on the part of the Jews arose from the fact that they were an avaricious race, proud of their lineage, and desirous of retaining the glory which surrounded their nation in its best days; and when the Son of God appeared clad in the habiliments of poverty, they despised Him, and refused to believe He was the Messiah, because He gave them no promise of earthly glory and splendor. When they were unable to turn the attention of men to themselves from His holy doctrines and stupendous works, they sought to calumniate Him, and called Him a malefactor. They accused Him of sedition. They put Him to death, and laughed Him to scorn as He writhed in agony, because of His apparent helplessness.

But Jesus Christ arose, "glorious and immortal from the dead, to die no more." Thus we see that the persecution and death of the Founder of the Church arose from the love of power and wealth, and the fanatic jealousy of the Jewish people.

When our divine Lord ascended into heaven, the Church inherited His sufferings. In her infancy she was assailed by

the power of the Roman Empire. And why? Not, surely, because her doctrines were about to injure the human family, for they had a contrary tendency, but because she inculcated habits of life contrary to the degrading debaucheries which were practiced in the Saturnalia in the presence of Cæsar, and which blindly led men to invent a god for every base passion, and to worship that God by the indulgence of that passion.

This was the first persecution of the Church. It took place in an age when brute force and military prowess were the chief characteristics of government: when the will of the ruler was law, and the State was regarded as the highest law.

The infant Church found shelter in the caves and tombs of her martyred children. But she came forth after the storm, and, presenting herself anew to the astonished gaze of men, proved that she was fashioned, not by man, but by God. When the Church received her liberty under Constantine, she enjoyed, as it were, in reward of her sufferings, a period of honor and glory. But she suffered again at the hands of the Moors, at the hands of the barbarians, who poured down their hordes into the peaceful homes of her children. She suffered from the jealousy of feudal barons and petty princes, who were always jealous of her unquestioned power. Forty-five times did the Supreme Pontiff leave Rome; and Rome, in his absence, grew grass at the doors of the inhabitants.

Thus the Church suffered persecution from brute force when the love of power and hero-worship distinguished the time. But the rack and sword were unequal to the task which the enemy of Christianity and of God set before himself, and hence he looked about at intervals for other weapons. This time the means were more subtle. He appealed to the vain intellect of man instead of to his strength of body. He not only brought the false philosophy of paganism to his aid, but, what is worse, he succeeded in creating a spirit of insubordination and revolt within the Church's ranks. He set the little intellect of man to examine the nature of the Revelation of God, and sometimes succeeded in inducing him to abandon his faith and propagate false doctrines, because,

forsooth, he could not comprehend what God never intended him to comprehend here below!

This was the origin of every error and heresy from Simon Magus to the sixteenth century. The world was proud of its philosophy, and therefore would combat Christianity. From this arose Arianism, and Nestorianism, and Eutychianism and Pelagianism, and other heresies which afflicted the Church. They followed one another as each preceding one was condemned, until scarcely a truth or a dogma remained in the cycle of Christian Faith which was not questioned or denied by some vain innovator, who placed himself above the Church of God.

But these heresies passed away, and the Church remained intact. After the Schisms of the East and the West had taken place, there was comparative peace from those internal afflictions until the sixteenth century. In that melancholy period she was subjected to one, if not the greatest, of her trials.

There were yet some dogmas which had never been impugned. Those which had been already denied appealed directly to man's intelligence, and demanded the reasonable submission of his understanding. Those which yet remained unquestioned had direct reference to the heart and will of man, and therefore to his morals, *viz.*, grace, justification, etc. The speculations and false theories of the intellect were combated and forever set at rest. It was therefore necessary to make this attack through the heart of man, by making an appeal to his passions. Sad to say, the morals of many were not the best at that period, and thus a way was prepared through which a terrible blow was given to the Church of God.

Doctrines were preached which changed the Christian code by forbidding mortification and promoting self-indulgence. Thus arose that fell heresy of the sixteenth century, which swept away some of the fairest portions of the Church. Oh! What a havoc that made! Looking back from this distance, we are tempted to wonder how indeed she could have survived that terrific storm, for surely she had not done so, had hers been a *human* institution.

England, Scotland, and Wales were blighted, and almost

blasted by it; Norway and Sweden, and Holland and Denmark, and a great portion of Northern Germany were lost in the darkness of error. Those, indeed, were sad and trying days for the Church. No doubt you are acquainted with their general features. That was the last effort of the kind until our own time, made by the Prince of Darkness, but mark in what slovenly fashion he did his work, and how completely he has been worsted.

From the very day that the new and false religion received the curse of the Church of God, it has been marching backwards. That curse penetrated to its very core. The foundations of the new structure rotted, and the superstructure fell and smashed into fragments. These fragments we see lying about us to-day in the shape of new sects of the most opposite tenets.

Beside these ruins stands the stately Church, the true Spouse of the Lamb, gazing with pity on the folly of mortal man, who tries to build himself a religion other than that to which she bears witness, which was not fashioned by human hands, but "came down out of heaven from God."

Ah, yes, while the enemy is ever marshalling and remarrying his scattered and defeated forces to renew his attack, the Church of God continues on her way, calmly and steadily advancing on her beneficent mission. All around her changes: the political, the scientific, and, outside her pale, even the religious world changes, but in the midst of all she remains the same as when she first appeared on the earth. Like to Eternity, where the absence of motion excludes time; like it in its comprehensiveness, for she embraces all nations, all peoples, all times; like it in its simplicity, for the Faith she teaches is an indivisible unit.

She is the same as the Church of Peter and Linus and Clement and Sixtus, of Constantine and Theodosian and Pepin and Charlemagne. The same as when she expelled Macedonius and Arius and Eutyches for their heresies; the same as when Photius made his Schism in the East; the same as when the so-called Reformers in the sixteenth century left her to make a religion of their own. She has been variously subjected to tortures to induce her to change, but again and again in the midst of her sufferings, and even

when prostrate in agony, she raised her bleeding hand, and held up before the eyes of the cruel, carnal world her proverbial "*Non possumus*," "I cannot." And why is this? It cannot be for pride, for she is equally interested in the salvation of all. It cannot be for wealth or power, for by refusing to change she is losing both. It must be solely because she is not of this world. "*Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo*,"—"*de mundo non estis*." It must be because "her foundations are in the holy mount" of everlasting truth, which never changes, which is "the same, yesterday, to-day and forever."

We now come to our own age. What shall we say of it? The persecution which has taken place is the scandal of this century. Except in this one land, where, thanks to God, we can freely follow the dictates of conscience, there is scarcely another on which the Church of God has a safe resting-place. Driven from place to place, she reminds us of that "milk-white hind" to which the poet compares her, panting for her very life after the chase of the bloodhounds. Accused of sedition, like her divine Founder, she declares to the world that the charge is false. Accused of disloyalty, she appeals to the brave deeds of her children in proof of her innocence. But her words are not heeded.

Nations have instituted proceedings against her, have framed laws against her life, and condemned her because she does not destroy herself. Italy enchained her, and yet mockingly tells her she is free. Switzerland has banished her, while France derides and tramples upon her. Her priests and bishops have been imprisoned as though they were malefactors. She is hounded down by secret societies and an infidel literature in every part of the world.

And what is the meaning of all this? What is its origin and its cause? "You are not of the world." She is publicly said to be "bringing forth and refurbishing her old rusty weapons to attack the progress of the world." Is this true? What weapons has the Church ever allowed to rust in her hands? What weapons has she ever used, except the weapon of truth, which alone makes mankind free? Or of faith, which overcometh the world? "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith." Who is he that overcomes the world but the one who believes that Jesus Christ is the

Son of God? Rather it is true to say that the *world* is bringing forth and refurbishing her old rusty weapons to combat the Church of Christ.

Paganism and brute force, as we have said, was the first enemy of the Christian Church. When that was defeated a false Christianity took its place. Every dogma of faith had its enemy in some age, until after the lapse of twenty centuries the whole body of doctrine was gone through, without the desired result, and there remained nothing else than to begin over again. Hence, mankind is shocked to-day because the world is become pagan again, and the persecution of the Church is nothing more than the renewal of that of the pagan age. That the world outside the Church is paganized is easily shown. And, indeed, it is the logical sequence of the principles of the sixteenth century. The principle of that heresy was a denial of the principle of authority in matters relating to eternity and the soul. Authority being removed, every one might make a religion for himself, or, if he chose, reject it altogether. Hence the principles of the "Reformation" have gradually tended to paganize the world, until we find it to-day, after three centuries, saturated with pagan doctrines and almost entirely pagan in its practices and customs.

The characteristics of paganism were that might and power and brute force constituted right; that the mightiest nation possessed the greatest armies, and swallowed up the less powerful without regard to justice or equity. Secondly: It was a period without God; *i.e.*, it had no God save what the nation pleased. The State was supreme, and sometimes the Emperor himself was the "*Divus Imperator.*" Doctrines were preached subversive of all true religion and morality.

These two characteristics apply most perfectly to the age in which we live. What are its doctrines and what are its practices with regard to religion? If we examine the natural statistics of the world we are astonished to find that millions grow up without any religion. Some years ago the statistics of this country gave many millions of people as without any religion at all! We know for a fact that the sanctity of the marriage tie and obligation is denied both in word and in deed, even by the highest representatives and rulers of the

world; we know that luxury and power and dazzling splendor constitute their highest happiness, as it did in the days of Trajan and Adrian. And lastly people have come even to destroy the memories of the Christian cemetery; they burn their dead, and place the ashes in urns, just as the pagans, as the tourist or traveler sees along the old Appian Way, outside Rome. Here, then, are the real practices of paganism. Now as to the doctrines.

Only a few years ago a celebrated scientist stood before an assembly on the other side of the Atlantic, and boldly declared that "Man is but a streak of morning cloud, destined to melt into the infinite azure of the past." That "In matter is the promise and potency of every form and quality of life." That "Man is but a machine constructed of organized matter, in fact, a developed clod of matter." That the soul is "but a function of the nervous system." These doctrines, which would uproot the very foundations of all religion, were taught six hundred years before the Christian era at all, and yet, after twenty centuries of Christianity have gone by, this man, in his vanity, brings forth as new the revolting doctrines of that degraded age!

But he is not alone: by no means. These doctrines pervade society, the schools and universities of the world, and penetrate to the halls of legislation. Veneration is paid to those philosophers. Reason, and Man, and the World of Matter are held to be the only gods, and the exaltation of man, and consequently, the dethronement of God, the highest aim of their false science of philosophy.

To propagate these doctrines, men of every class and of all kinds are made use of. Societies are formed for this express purpose, and move as one man. These societies borrow all the semblance without a sole spark of the Christian virtue of charity. They are benevolent, they assist each other, excluding all who are not of themselves, so as to do their work efficiently. They even put on an appearance of religion (for human nature, even paganzed, must have some kind of religion), and manage to have a religion of their own. It has been said that "Freemasonry" is enough religion for any man! They have their own rites and ceremonies. They have their high priest, and their own peculiar

habiliments, like the pagan priests of old. Through these societies and by the aid of bad literature, the world sows the seed of these false principles among men.

The world is paganized. Therefore the conflict with the Church is nothing else than the reproduction of that which Christianity had to sustain in its infancy. And yet to persecute the Church is to destroy the very sources of true civilization. She is the mother and home of the arts and sciences. It was she who retaught Europe, after the ravages of the hordes of the north, how to cultivate the soil, how to reclaim the forest, as well as to be skilled in letters. It was she who fertilized a great portion of France and Italy; it was her children who established her universities; it was under her influence that France became great and respected, and Spain never was so glorious as when under the Catholic Ferdinand. It was she who civilized the barbarians of Paraguay and Brazil and the nations of South America, and yet, in those very lands where the sweat of her children has flowed most profusely, is she treated with the greatest cruelty. But as we are almost at a loss to account for it, the words of our divine Lord come back to us through twenty centuries telling us, "*De mundo non estis. Regnum meum non est hinc.*"

And now, having reviewed these afflictions of the Church, in the light of the revealed word of the Lord, we are able to account for the trying ordeal and sad days through which we are passing. Viewing them with minds illumined by divine Faith, and with eyes which have so often looked on the image of the Incarnate Son of God upon the cross, we are neither scandalized nor astonished.

Are we to lose courage or confidence in the future? Ah, no, a thousand times, no! Were not those very hands which formed man and the world and everything upon it, once nailed to the cross and buried in the tomb? And yet Jesus Christ, our Captain, Our Lord and Saviour, arose glorious and immortal from the dead. Ah, no! For even though the pain should last for centuries, it would be nothing new to the Church of Christ.

That Church, which has ever been victorious, will always manifest the Power which supports her, and the Life which animates her. She came on earth to bring the tidings of

salvation to all men, down to the end of time, and that mission she will fulfil to the end, despite all the machinations of her enemies. Her enemies fall, one by one, as they succeed each other in the combat, but she is everlasting, she never dies. She has looked on the grave of Herod and the Synagogue; of Nero and Caligula and Domitian; of Mahomet and Attila; of Henry VIII, of Cavour, Mazzini and the Napoleons, and she shall hear one day of the death and burial and blighted names of her other enemies. Instead of doing her vital injury, they will enliven the faith of her children.

Therefore "Put ye on the armor of Faith." Remember that "you are not of the world," and be not surprised or discouraged by the difficulties in your way. Go on assisting the Church by the brightness of your Christian lives; by promoting works of charity of every kind; by removing, as much as possible, the baneful influence of false principles; by counteracting the poisonous effects of bad literature. Let it be your highest glory to profess your Faith before the world. Hearken with fidelity to the voice of the Chief Pastor of Christendom, and be equally faithful to your bishops and priests, who have their authority from him.

When the storm has passed, your fidelity will be a source of joy to you, and perseverance in it will be the direct road to that blessed home where we shall rest from persecution. Where Faith shall be no longer needed, but rewarded by the bright vision of everlasting Truth; where Hope shall be changed into fruition; and Charity perfected in the boundless ocean of God's love. A blessing I wish you.

PART II
ON CATHOLIC PRACTICE AND DEVOTION

PRAYER, THE TREASURE OF THE UNIVERSE

NO MATTER in what condition a soul may be, whether clothed with the garment of charity and sanctifying grace, or odious in the sight of God on account of sin, whether blessed with the gift of divine Faith, or wandering in the maze and obscurity of error, there is one grace which is always given and never refused; that is the grace of prayer. Prayer is, therefore, every one's treasure—the treasure of the universe.

Prayer is the direct communion of the faithful soul with the divine Being who is the center of his love. Prayer is the solace of the weary heart, which, raising its aspirations from earthly objects, in which there is nothing to satisfy, and placing them at the foot of the throne of mercy, draws down upon it the refreshing waters of God's love.

Prayer is that last and only privilege of the prodigal and abandoned, through which he may yet "obtain mercy and find grace" from the God whom he has outraged by sin. It is the mirror by which the light of God is reflected, to guide those who wander in error and doubt to the path of truth and certainty. It is, in a word, a privilege given by God to every child of Adam, confined to no particular individual or body; restricted by no limits of time or place. The property of the poor as well as the rich; of the sinner as well as the saint.

Moreover, prayer is always efficacious if made in that manner which is pleasing to God. Notwithstanding, very few esteem the grace of prayer in its proper light. Few attach due importance to it, even among those, perhaps, who flatter themselves that they are children and faithful followers of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Did we but know with the knowledge of the elect around the throne of God the great advantage of this holy exercise, how different would be our attention to it! Did we but know its necessity, even as those

know it who once possessed the privilege as we do now, but from whom it has been taken away forever, and supplanted by everlasting remorse, how earnestly would we discharge this sacred debt!

We are commanded by the Son of God to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation, to pray without ceasing, at all times. And yet how lightly do we pass over the precept, as though it were unnecessary to observe it, not even once, perhaps, or at best, twice, if at all, during the day, complying with the injunction of our divine Lord. We view it, perhaps, more in the light of a something we *must* do, and which we are anxious to hurry with and have done, than a favor conferred on us by Almighty God. In entering upon an examination of this point, we should not look on prayer so much in the light of a task to be performed, as a privilege of sublime excellency, and, if performed well, one of the chief sources of our happiness on earth.

What, then, is prayer? Prayer, according to the etymology of its Latin synonym (*oratio—oris-ratio*) is a manifestation in words of our hearts to God; an entire exposition of our wants: but it is usually defined as “an elevation of the soul to God, with a petition for useful things, and founded on the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and His saints.”

Prayer is twofold: vocal and mental. Vocal, or that made in a form of words, is the lowest or least perfect degree of prayer. Mental is that made in the mind alone, without any form of words. Mental prayer is also twofold, *viz.*, Contemplative and Meditative. The Contemplative prayer or that which consists in the contemplation of any of the perfections of God, or any of the mysteries of Faith, is the most perfect form of prayer. Meditative prayer is, perhaps, the most useful, and consists in meditating on divine truths, and drawing therefrom some practical conclusions suitable to our spiritual wants.

Knowing the meaning and nature of prayer, it would seem superfluous to show that it is a privilege, and of sublime excellency. Is it not enough to know that it is an elevation of the soul to God, a communion with God, a bond of union between the heart of God and the heart of man? A moment, a precious time, in which the creature receives an audience

in the sanctuary of the ineffable presence of the Creator. Can there be anything more necessary to demonstrate the excellency of prayer? In prayer with God we adore Him as our supreme Lord; we speak to Him familiarly as to a loving father; we ask from Him all that we need, as from a kind friend. Were we introduced to some very celebrated personage in the world, we should be inclined to consider it a privilege. When a subject is brought into the presence of his king, even though that monarch does not condescend to notice him, or, at least, only recognizes him in a few words of humiliating patronage, he considers himself honored. Now, in prayer we are not only introduced into the presence of the King of monarchs, and Ruler of kings, but we are invited, even by His own words, with His own divine lips, to speak to Him, and ask what we need, with an assurance that we shall be heard. "Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (St. John xiv. 13).

Surely this is a privilege of the highest order; a favor whose excellency surpasses any which can be accorded to us on earth, by any being whatsoever, except God. It was this intimate conviction of its excellency which made prayer so dear to the Prophet, King David. From his own words we are inclined to think that his heart was ever bound to the heart of God by the golden tie of holy prayer, that his lips were almost incessantly blessing God, or asking mercy from Him. Can anything be more sublime than those effusions of love embodied in his Psalms? Apparently languishing with the love of God, he is unable to find words adequate to the desires of his heart. He tells us that seven times in the day he sang the praises of God; that he watched the morning dawn to offer his heart to God; that at night, if he awoke, his soul communed with God; that during the day and in the evening his prayer ascended before His throne, and again, that all day and all night he cried to the Lord.

Here is an evidence of the excellency of prayer. David was "a man according to the heart of God," the Holy Spirit tells us, and behold, how he esteemed prayer. Surely, it was to him not so much a duty as a favor of the highest excellency. And thus also shall we find, at all times, that as men

rose above the things of earth, and became more closely united to God, they practiced, in the same ratio, this holy exercise of prayer, thus showing us its true nature, by their ever-increasing attention to it, according as they became more enlightened and favored by Almighty God.

Again, I might put before you the miracles of prayer. It was through prayer that Moses obtained victory over the Amalekites, continuing in prayer, with his hands raised to heaven, until the people of God were victorious. It was through prayer that Josue made the sun prolong its light in the heavens until he overcame his enemies. Through prayer Gedeon received a sign of his mission from God, to be the leader of his army. Through prayer, Elias drew down rain from heaven, to fertilize the earth parched by a continued drought. Through prayer, the Hebrew children were preserved in the furnace of fire into which the pagan king had cast them. In fact, I might adduce from every page of the Old Testament some fact which shows the excellency and efficacy of prayer.

But for us Christians, for us whose model is Jesus Christ, no argument, however great, can prove so well the exalted nature and excellency of prayer, as the example and practice of our divine Lord. When Our Lord commanded us to pray unceasingly, He did not give us a precept without setting us an example of its observance. The high importance our blessed Lord attached to the holy exercise of prayer is manifest from the care He took when in prayer at certain times, to be perfectly undisturbed. And when He had dismissed them [the people] (as we read in St. Mark vi. 46), "He went up to the mountain to pray." And again, "He went into the wilderness to pray," and in St. Luke, fifth and sixth chapters, we are told He went "into the desert to pray," and "passed the whole night in prayer," to God. When the miraculous event of the Transfiguration took place, we are shown how, taking with Him Peter and James and John, He went up into a mountain to pray, and while He prayed His blessed countenance changed and His garments became white as snow.

Who can read and dwell on these sacred passages without being convinced of the sublimity of prayer? Who can

read them without marveling why the Son of God should pray, and pray especially with such absorbed attention, with such scrupulous care to be alone? Was He not God Himself, and was it, then, necessary that He should go aside at certain times to hold communion with the Deity, like mortal man? Did He not possess an intuitive, intimate knowledge of the Godhead, even as the Father and the Holy Ghost? Was He not always perfectly happy in the Beatific Vision? Why, then, did He withdraw from the world at intervals? Why have we, through the writings of the holy Evangelists, so especially noticed those long watchings, those solitary prayers on the mountains, and in the wilderness? There were many acts, very many, of our divine Lord's life, which the Evangelists have never mentioned. St. John tells us (xxi. 25) that were all recorded, "the world itself would not be able to contain the books that should be written." Why, then, mention these solitary prayers in preference to other acts which might better exhibit to our minds the great power and divinity of the Son of God?

For an answer to this we may assign many reasons. Certainly it was not that He needed to pray for mercy or pardon for Himself, for He knew not sin, and He could not sin. Nor did He need to pray for wealth, or health, or temporal goods, because all were at His command: but He despised the world and its vanities. "He embraced the cross, despising the shame of it." He took poverty, humiliation, and suffering as a choice, for our sakes. He prayed, because though being God, He was man also, and prayer to God is the duty of man. As God, He was equal to His Father in all things, but as man, He owed to the Deity the homage of man. He prayed, then, because prayer is an act of the most perfect homage to God, and Our Lord, being the divine impersonation of human perfection, it was fitting that He should fulfil all the duties of humanity to the Godhead. He prayed, because, as man, His will was perfectly subject to, and in accord with, the will of God, and because He knew that the perfection of the human heart and soul consisted in complete union with God, their Center, Creator, and End. He prayed to demonstrate to us, by His bright and glorious example, the excellency of prayer, for surely

that exercise must excel in which the Son of God spent such long hours. Wherefore it must be to us a privilege, since the Christ Himself esteemed it so highly. And who can tell the perfection of that sweet and solemn prayer of the Son of God! Did we get but one glimpse of the stainless sanctity of His soul! Were we allowed to assist at that perfect conversation of His with the Eternal Father, how far different would be our notions of prayer!

But it is remarkable that where the Evangelist records these solemn moments of prayer of the Son of God, immediately follows the record of some great event: A miracle, or an example of superhuman suffering. We are told that when, through the supplication of Martha and Mary, or, rather, through compassion for their loss, He wished to raise Lazarus from the dead, He previously stood over the grave, and with tears and groans, prayed to His heavenly Father. In like manner He prayed when about to multiply the loaves and fishes for the multitude. He prayed when the great act of His Transfiguration was about to take place, and He prayed when He restored sight to the blind, and made the lame walk. Thus we see that He made even His most stupendous works of power apparently to depend on, and at all times to accompany, His prayer as man. Hence, another proof of the excellency of prayer, for were not the Son of God convinced of this, why should He have always prefaced His wonderful works by an act of prayer to God?

But it was not alone when He wrought miracles that Jesus Christ prayed. Strange as it may seem to us, we are told by the Evangelists that Our Lord prayed for Himself. St. John (xii. 27), speaking of His last visit to Jerusalem, tells us that He prayed thus: "My soul is troubled. Father, save Me from this hour." In the history of His agony in the Garden, it is related that He went aside from His disciples about a stone's throw, and here poured out His soul to His heavenly Father. "Father," said He, "if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me; but yet not My will, but Thine be done" (St. Luke xxii. 42). Three several times did He repeat this prayer as His sorrow and suffering approached.

Are there moments when, in suffering pain, you are tempted to murmur, or grow impatient? Have recourse

to Him who knows your affliction, and He will relieve you! When, in your trials, you are forsaken by friends, like the Son of God; when your enemies rejoice, and there is not even one to say a kind word to you; ah, then, remember the example of Jesus Christ, who, in the days of His flesh, offered up His prayers with a strong cry to His heavenly Father, and as He was consoled by an angel from heaven after He had finished His prayer, so will He send you the sweet consolation of His grace, that you may be strengthened to endure your afflictions.

Yes, the Son of God was sorrowful, as man, and as man He found His true comfort in prayer. The Son of God suffered as man, and as man by prayer was He strengthened to endure. His life must be your model, and thus must you learn to wean yourself from human sympathy, that you may place all your hope in God. Thus must you beseech God for patience, in proportion to the afflictions it may please His divine will to send you for your advantage.

But Jesus Christ not only prayed for Himself in His acts of power and sufferings. He also prayed for others. Ah! yes! who can doubt but that during those long hours of silent prayer, the existence of His Church during all ages came before His mind, every hour of its triumph and glory, as well as its sufferings and sorrows, and the fidelity of some as well as the ingratitude of many whom He loved. Who can doubt but during His long vigils He prayed for all; for the wayward and the obstinate, as well as for those who were more faithful children; since even at His death He prayed for His executioners? Who can doubt but He poured forth sublime petitions, that His chosen children should tread with unswerving fortitude the rugged path which He would have traveled before them?

In St. Luke (xvii) is this last solemn prayer for His disciples and for His Church through every successive age, that it might ever give evidence of the divine impress of His omnipotent hand. He prayed for Peter, when about to make him head of His Church on earth, and, in his person, for his successors in the headship. "Simon, Simon," said He, "behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith

fail not, and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren." Our blessed Lord has shown us the efficacy of prayer. His life was a prayer, His dying expressions a prayer for His own executioners. Who, then, can sufficiently esteem this great privilege? Who can tell its sweets better than by saying it was the choice act of the Heart of Jesus Christ during His life and at His death?

Some one may say that since Jesus Christ is God, and since prayer is a communion with the Deity, He found unspeakable happiness in that act which He so manifestly loved. It is true, He is God; but He was also man; and as man, by so much as His sacred humanity approached His Divinity, so much more than all other men did He love prayer. This again proves the excellency of prayer, as well as its necessity for us, for if Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, made man, prayed, then prayer must be an exalted act, and if as man He condescended to seek consolation and strength in prayer, how much more should we, in time of trials and temptations and dangers, seek to obtain grace in order to bear with fortitude the ills of this life!

But even did we content ourselves with examples of those who, like ourselves, were only human, we should still find abundant evidence of the excellency and advantage of holy prayer.

What induced the Blessed Virgin Mary, for instance, to consecrate herself in the Temple and become the first of that virgin train which has descended from her, and raised humanity to the perfection of angels? It was that, being free from the distractions of earth, she might the more easily commune with God. It was because the excellency of prayer attracted her. What induced Paul and Anthony to found monastic institutions, and the cells of hermits and recluses, but that all might pray without interruption? What else but the excellency of prayer attracted St. Jerome to the cave in Jerusalem, and drew from him those memorable words on the sweets of prayer and solitude? Oh, blessed solitude! Oh, *beata solitudo!* What brought St. Hilary to the desert to make his abode a hermit's cell for the space of sixty years, if it were not the conviction of the excellency of uninterrupted prayer? What but the love of prayer could

induce the glorious Apostle, St. Patrick, to lead such a life as he led in his young days, when he bent his knees in prayer to God a hundred times a day and a hundred times a night?

Prayer is the companion of the solitary, the consoler of the afflicted, the guide of the doubtful. Prayer is the strength of the martyr, the happiness of the virgin, the light of the confessor. It is the preserver of sanctity, the reconciliation of the sinner, the hope of the living, and the safeguard of the dying. It is a colloquy with God, an equal honor to that which the angels enjoy.

No wonder, then, that we read in the life of that prodigy of prayer, St. Teresa, that, yearning for the salvation of souls, she desired to be able to visit a high mountain whence she might speak to every individual of the human race. Could she obtain such a favor, she would (she said) confine herself to three words: "Pray, Pray, Pray!" If you wish to love God, pray; if you wish to continue in His love, pray; and pray, if you wish to die in His love and save your immortal soul.

What more expressive exhortation can I use, in conclusion, than the words of St. Teresa? But as a form of prayer I cannot refrain from recommending you two special kinds of devotion, *viz.*, devotion to Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of His love, and devotion to the Ever-Blessed Virgin, Mother of God. Oh! Who can fathom the depth of love overflowing that fountain day and night! Who can speak with lips too pure of the sanctity of that awful Presence? If you would know how sweet are His silent words, speak to Him in His Sacrament of love. Yes, pray to Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, and while you do so, pray to Mary also, whom Jesus loves now as while upon earth. She is the Refuge of sinners, the Help of Christians, the Comfortress of the afflicted. Ask her then, sometimes, for her intercession, pray to her every day. Let her name be, with that of Jesus, always on your lips both in your trials and temptations.

Learn to unite these holy names; love them during your lives, and you shall not be forgotten at your death by those who bear them!

THE MANNER OF PRAYER

WE HAVE seen that so far from regarding prayer as an exercise, or duty, we should look upon it as a favor and privilege of the highest excellency and greatest importance. This has been demonstrated to you from the very nature of prayer itself, from the examples of the Old Law, and from the lives and habits of the saintly servants of God, who, the more perfect they became, so much the more did they love prayer. Our divine Lord, during His holy life on earth, prayed long and continually; and holy men and women who practiced this holy exercise left behind them a record of its advantage, and their estimate of its excellency.

Having before our minds the excellency and efficacy of prayer, sanctioned by the practice of the Son of God, and by those who loved God above all things, you have already formed the good resolution of paying increased attention to it in future, so that all may advance in virtue. Our next duty is to know and understand how we are to pray so as to make our prayer fruitful unto sanctification.

Before entering on the conditions necessary to render our prayers efficacious, we must not forget that our blessed Lord has commanded us to "pray always, and not grow weary." At first sight it would seem impossible to fulfil this precept. But when we come to consider its signification, it is not only possible, but easy. It means that we must offer to Almighty God all our thoughts, words, and actions, that we renew this offering occasionally, and thus fulfil the precept.

By this method of exercising our devotion, every thought, every word and action, provided there is nothing in them morally wrong, becomes a prayer to God. But besides this form of implicit prayer at all times, it is also required by the divine command that we pray often, both expressly and explicitly, *viz.*, by applying ourselves directly to a com-

munion with God. This we learn, not only from the words of our blessed Lord, but also from His example.

As in demonstrating the excellency of prayer His example was our chief argument, so also in learning the manner we must observe when praying His example will sufficiently guide us.

When Our Lord prayed, He retired from the world. He prayed during the silence of the night when all nature was reposing, and there was nothing to disturb His sweet communion with God, the Father. He prayed at early morning, on the mountain-top, while as yet the busy scenes of life had not broken in upon the placid face of the universe, and His prayer was mellowed, as it were, by the vigor of its early freshness. So must we retire from the bustle and noise of the world when we wish to devote *particular* attention to prayer. If we do not retire to the mountain or the desert, let us at least go into some silent spot, where there shall be nothing exterior to disturb us, and then, kneeling reverently, we shall endeavor to recollect the great and solemn duty which we are about to perform, according to the injunction, "Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not like a man who tempteth God." The habit of retirement during prayer thus acquired will be the means of insuring the first condition necessary to render our prayers efficacious.

The next condition is attention of the mind and affection of the heart. Without this attention and affection, our prayer, so far from being productive of good to ourselves, may become injurious, because being offensive and derogatory to God, whom we are addressing. Hence, St. Chrysostom, speaking to him who prays without attention, says, "You yourself do not hear the prayer you are making to God, and yet you wish Him to hear you!" St. Cyprian adds, "How do you ask to be heard by Almighty God, when you do not even hear yourself; do you wish that God should attend to you, when you forget yourself?" And, indeed, it seems to be quite reasonable that God should be displeased with such a prayer when we recollect that even among men, if one while addressing another should show carelessness or inattention about what he is saying, the hearer is generally dis-

pleased and justly considered to be offended. But in prayer we are addressing the Creator of mankind, our Sovereign and our God. It is therefore a duty we owe to His infinite majesty to be always attentive and well-disposed while engaged in prayer before Him—otherwise we should be included among those of whom He complains through His prophet, “These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.”

Our Lord, commenting on the inattention and indisposition of the Pharisees during prayer, tells His disciples to avoid their example, saying (according to St. Matthew), “But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee” (vi. 6). In this sentence our blessed Lord indicates three things which are necessary to secure attention.

We must first avoid every species of vain-glory; we must not, like the Pharisees, make our prayer for the sole purpose of being seen by men, but pray in secret as much as possible, and if, at any time, we are bound to take a part in the public homage due to God from His creatures, we must so perform our acts of prayer (as St. Gregory teaches), “That, while our work is public, our intention remains in secret simple, and to the honor of God,” thus making our act subserve the promotion of God’s honor and the good of our neighbor, who will glorify God through us.

In the second place (according to St. Augustine), by entering into our chamber, “We pray more purely, more fervently, more familiarly, and more freely.” For it is in silence and solitude that the Holy Ghost speaks chiefly to the heart; and hence, as though making solitude a prelude to His communion with the soul, God, speaking through Osee to the Spouse, says, “I will lead her into solitude, and I will speak to her heart,” and the Psalmist expressing the same thought, says, “For He speaks peace to those who turn themselves to reflection interiorly.”

Thus we understand that to enter into one’s chamber to pray, literally signifies, to recall our thoughts to ourselves: “I thought over my ways, and I turned my steps to Thy precepts.”

The third point indicated in the words of our blessed Lord, is that we must shut out all thoughts of the exterior world from our mind during prayer, and hence the expression, "Having shut the door of your chamber," that is, having shut the doors of the senses, which are the entrances through which all vain and distracting thoughts enter and take possession of our minds. It would be in vain for us to endeavor to fix our attention on Almighty God, or to be earnest in our petition to Him, if we should neglect, at the same time, to keep this strict guard over the senses. Should we open the doors of our senses to these distractions, then our prayers would become confused, and an object of disgust to Almighty God. Certainly, if we are bound to guard our senses at all times, in an especial manner are we, with greater reason, obliged to watch, lest during the holy exercise of prayer they become the means of rendering that sacred action useless to ourselves and offensive to God. Prayer must therefore be made with attention and devotion; with that attention which implies at least the object of God's honor; and with that affection of the heart which is disposed to please God in accordance with His holy will.

The second condition necessary to make prayer available in the sight of God is, that it must be accompanied by humility; diffidence in ourselves, and entire confidence in God. Our blessed Lord Himself set us this example when on earth He bowed down to adore the Godhead which dwelt within Him. We must pray with humility, for God "exalts the humble, while He scatters the proud in the desires of their hearts, and deposes them from the exalted places they would occupy." "The prayer of the humble man pierces the cloud, and does not depart until the Most High behold," and again, "He has regarded the prayer of the humble, and has not rejected their petitions." In the Old Testament we find humility and diffidence expressed as an integral portion of the prayers of the patriarchs. Thus Jacob prays when he wishes to be delivered from the anger of his brother, Esau: "God of my father, Abraham, and God of my father, Isaac . . . I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies, and of Thy truth which Thou hast fulfilled to Thy servant . . . Deliver me (rescue me) from the hand of my brother

Esau." Thus also, Manasses, "I have sinned above the number of sands in the seashore, but I bow down in the humility of my heart, beseeching Thy goodness that Thou wouldst save me, though unworthy, because Thou art good." And the Prophet Daniel, praying to the Lord, waives every consideration except that of God Himself, and the holy place in which He vouchsafed to manifest Himself in a special manner to His people. "For not in our own justices do we place our prayers before Thy face, but in Thy manifold mercies." Hence the Royal Prophet, in many of his Psalms, employs himself in recounting his many miseries, and in perfectly manifesting before God all his sins, his wounds, his ulcers, and his nothingness, in order that he would move God to compassionate him. He goes so far, even, as to compare himself to a little helpless infant, who, incapable of preserving its own life, or making any attempt at saving itself, is entirely dependent on the care of its mother. So does the Prophet acknowledge himself before God in prayer, weeping and bemoaning his miseries, and asking for the protection and perpetual guardianship of Almighty God. It is thus we also must pray, and with the same profound humility and diffidence in ourselves.

But on the other hand, we must pray with the most unbounded confidence in God. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, which is moved and carried about by the wind. Therefore let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord" (St. James i. 6, 7). Our blessed Lord says, "All things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come unto you" (St. Mark xi. 24). It is plain, therefore, that confidence in God's goodness is necessary to obtain our request. This confidence is founded on the goodness of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, which are both infinite and inexhaustible, and also in the divine promise, which can never be fruitless, although "heaven and earth shall pass away."

St. Cyprian says that we receive inundating grace in proportion to the faith and confidence we possess, for "the mercy of God (he says) is like to a certain inexhaustible fountain of good, from which he draws most who brings the

largest vessel of faith and confidence." St. Augustine accuses mankind of tardiness in asking, because he says, "God is better prepared and more ready to give than we are to receive," and St. Ambrose remarks that "Grace is more abundant than prayer, for God always gives more than He is asked for."

Abraham prayed that he might be blessed in his old age with a son, and for this confidence he was rewarded in the multiplication of his descendants. Solomon asked wisdom, and received wisdom and riches. The Prophet Ezechias asked health, and fifteen years were added to his life. The Samaritan woman asked for water (material) and received the water of everlasting life. The centurion asked Our Lord to heal his servant by His word, but our blessed Lord said He would come and heal him in the house. The thief asked our blessed Lord not to forget him in His kingdom, and received in reward an assurance of paradise. Thus are faith and confidence in God's goodness always rewarded, and thus does God give more than He is asked for.

But you may say, perhaps, "How is it, then, that I have been praying so long, and so often, and never have I received the object of my petition?" My answer is with St. James, "You pray and you receive not, because you ask remiss." You pray, but you do not pray in the name of Jesus Christ—that is, you do not pray for things which are conducive either to God's honor or your own salvation. "Whatever is asked contrary to salvation," says St. Augustine, "is not asked in the name of the Saviour." For it is not so much the sound of the words as what they signify, that Our Lord meant when He said, "*In nomine meo.*" You have not received because you have not continued to ask. You have not been sufficiently importunate.

The third condition of efficacious prayer is perseverance. "Certain things are not denied, but that they may be given in opportune time, they are deferred" (St. Augustine). Almighty God defers the object of our petition for various reasons; sometimes it is that He may prove the strength of our faith and the firmness of our hope; for there are many who, when they do not receive, turn away from God, and seek consolation in sin. It is mentioned in the Old Testa-

ment that Ochozias, when injured by a fall, said to his servant, "Go and consult Beelzebub, the God of Accaron, whether I shall survive this infirmity," and the Prophet Elias answered, "Is there not a God in Israel, whereas thou shouldst go to consult Beelzebub, the God of Accaron?" And the prophet pronounced the judgment of God on Ochozias, saying, "From the bed on which thou reclinest thou shalt not come down, but thou shalt die the death." Thus also did Judith reprove the citizens of Bethulia for not having persevered in prayer, rather than render themselves victims to Holofernes. Thus does the Psalmist, praying to Almighty God, complain with importunity. He does not hear his prayer.

"Why, O Lord, dost Thou refuse my prayer, and turn away Thy face from me?" And the Prophet Habacuc: "How long, O Lord, shall I cry out, and Thou wilt not hear? How long shall I exclaim, suffering violence, and Thou not save me?" And St. Jerome, interpreting this particular passage, compares the prophet to a sick person who cries out to his physician, who always answers, "I know the proper time to give you what you ask; to give you now would be cruel to yourself, but I shall not allow the proper time to pass by without granting your request."

Let us, then, never forget that perseverance is a necessary condition of prayer, and if Almighty God seems at any time to forget us, or to turn away His face from us, we must look for the reason either in the deficiency of the necessary conditions of our prayers, or in the goodness of God, who merely defers His benefits for our greater spiritual advantage.

We must, then, have always before our minds the words which the Lord commanded the Prophet Habacuc to have inscribed on tables. "If He delays, await Him; because coming He shall come, and He will not delay." Even Our Lord in His agony repeated the self-same prayer. It was through his perseverance in prayer that Jacob received the blessing of the angel. It was through perseverance in prayer that St. Monica received from Almighty God the grace of conversion for her son, St. Augustine, to the true Christian Faith. Perseverance, therefore, is as necessary

to render prayer efficacious as is attention or confidence in God.

Having put before your minds now the great privilege we enjoy in being allowed to pray to Almighty God, and in the examples showing the great advantage of this holy exercise and the manner of making it well, it only remains to exhort you for the love of your souls to practice it.

By prayer we can obtain the grace necessary to preserve us from sin and keep us in the friendship of God. Pray, therefore, pray, especially morning and night; offer always your thoughts, words, and actions to be sanctified by God. Pray for the welfare of the Church, and for our Chief Pastor, the Pope, as did the faithful when St. Peter was in prison. Pray also for the conversion of sinners.

Thus will you satisfy the precept Our Lord gave you, and thus will you obtain the graces which will conduct you to the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

HUMILITY

IN ORDER to understand properly the character of true humility, we have presented to us a picture of it by Our Lord Himself in the Gospel.

He places before us two persons, one of whom was regarded as a model and type of justice and sanctity, and the other a type and impersonation of every crime. The first had every virtue, but so full was he of his own holiness and superiority that he despised those who did not live as he did. He seems to have all the virtues except one—Humility.

The other seems to have had all the vices, except one, Pride. Not a virtue could he or did he lay claim to except one, humility. And yet Our Lord declares he was more pleasing in the sight of God than the other.

St. John Chrysostom does not hesitate to say that the state of sin with humility is better than the state of justice with pride, because pride destroys in a short time the piety of the just, while humility effaces sin and obtains the sanctification of the sinner.

Let us contemplate the humility of the publican.

He commenced its exercise at the very door of the Temple, the farthest off from the altar, the last place, because he considered himself the last of all. He knew himself, and this knowledge was the foundation of his humility. He knew his career for his whole life; how many acts of injustice, fraud, oppression, etc., he had been guilty of, and the very recollection of these sins made him think very little of himself, and seek the lowest, the last place. The Pharisee had already gone up to the altar, the people had advanced far into the Temple, but he cared not; he remained away, hidden as it were, and caring to be seen only by Almighty God. He bent his knee at the door, bowed down his head, and prostrated himself.

This is not all. Not only does he despise himself, he consents to be despised. The Pharisee is already declaiming his good works, and thanking God for his goodness, and, before he ends, insults the poor publican.

He answers not, he moves not, he raises not his head, though he might have accused the Pharisee of vain-glory. But, no, he makes neither reproach nor complaint. He is convinced that in these humiliations he is receiving his due. The very thought of his sins reminds him of that.

Dear people, we do not know ourselves. We do not study our hearts and consciences, therefore we have a very small share of humility. And, on the other hand, because we do not desire to humble ourselves or allow ourselves to be humiliated, therefore the cloak of darkness remains over our hearts and we are blind to our faults.

It should only be necessary for us to look into our hearts to discover the depth of our misery, and according to St. Jerome, it is in that very deep misery we should find the precious pearl of humility. This is why St. Augustine so constantly cried, "Lord, grant that I may know Thee; for the more I know Thee, the more will I love Thee; but, at the same time, grant that I may know myself, for the more I know myself, the more will I despise myself."

And truly, dear friends, when we come to look at our misery, what a subject of humiliation for us. In common with all others, we are merely a handful of dust. And then our souls, our minds and intellects! What ignorance, what prejudice, what mistakes we are capable of! Our hearts, what malignity is there not within these—evil that we are almost unwilling to acknowledge. How many passions—anger, impatience, secret envy, petty jealousies! What corruption in our wills! What inclination to evil! What inconstancy in doing good! This is the history of the human heart in general, and if each one of us were to give a particular account of all the thoughts, sentiments, impressions, misrepresentations, all the words, deeds, and frailties that he or she has been guilty of during life, is there any one, even the best of us, who would not readily exclaim, "What is man, O Lord, that Thou art mindful of him?"

A soul penetrated with such knowledge, and judging with

the light of grace and reason, will care little for the vain honors, preferences, and considerations of the world. It was this knowledge that made the poor publican convinced that, instead of any injury, the Pharisee was doing him justice.

“He raised not his eyes to heaven.” While the Pharisee strode before the altar, in the face of the multitude, and proclaimed his good deeds, the poor publican not only remained near the door, but absolutely was so confused at the sight of the altar that he did not even make so bold as to raise his eyes to heaven, nor toward the altar, nor any one present. He remembered all his acts of injustice, and he remembered also that the God of Israel called Himself their Father, and so kept down his eyes in confusion before God.

When humility resides in the heart, it will readily appear exteriorly. It will not be necessary to assume it; that would not be humility, it would be pride, disguised under the mask of humility. A truly humble person tries to hide even that virtue. Nevertheless, St. Jerome says that glory as surely follows that virtue as the shadow follows the substance.

But where humility shows itself most efficaciously and truly, is in receiving the Sacraments, in assisting at Mass, in prayer, etc. What sources of grace are not the Sacraments for those that are truly humble! What contrition for sin in the Sacrament of Penance, what resolutions of amendment, what desires to do penance and please God! What profound adoration at Mass, what sublime acts of homage, what thanksgiving comes up from the heart of the humble soul in the presence of the Incarnate God at Mass! Faith will picture, for instance, the angels, the pure, spotless angels, veiling their faces, and then recollecting one's own littleness, and the presence of the same God, what sentiments will fill the soul! “He struck his breast, saying, ‘Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.’”

Here we have another and very great characteristic of true humility. This poor sinner knew he had been a great sinner, indeed—but is he driven away from Almighty God? No, the greater his sins, the more disheartening his state, the more confidence he shows in the mercy and goodness of God!

And just because he declares and acknowledges that he is unworthy of pardon, therefore God pardons him all. What an example of instruction, and what a consolation for all who have been unfaithful to the grace of God! An example to be followed by every one, even the most exalted in sanctity, for the most exalted are, indeed, the humble. We, too, must come to the feet of Our Lord, and we must say to Him, with the same confidence as the poor publican, "Dearest Lord, be merciful to me! I confess that I have not always been as faithful to Thee and the whisperings of Thy grace as I should have been, but for this very reason, because I have forgotten Thy goodness, and because I have been unfaithful to Thee, this is the very reason for which I come to Thee. Thou alone canst make me holy, Thou alone canst make me victorious, Thou alone canst give me a heart truly virtuous, and bind it to Thy holy law and will with the bonds of grace which will not break."

Happy those humble souls, that as every day passes over, spend some time in remembering the sources of gratitude to God; in dwelling on their own nothingness and miseries, and, on the other hand, on the unspeakable goodness of God.

Such a practice nourishes humility and confidence in God, consoles and strengthens the weary soul, and begets a disgust in the heart for the false and frivolous consolations which this poor vale of tears offers us.

Thus, also, do we learn the lesson of the Heart of Jesus Christ, meekness and humility. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of Heart."

THE WORLD: THE ENEMY OF GOD

A LENTEN SERMON

“Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world; if any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him” (I St. John ii. 15).

THROUGHOUT the entire sacred writings, there is one prominent feature, which, above all others, attracts our attention; one great truth inculcated, which seems to be the parent idea, and the connecting link, as well as the purpose, of the inspired counsels; and that feature, that idea and dogma is, that we must love God above all things, and that to love Him, as is His due, we must hate the world. For as the world is the enemy of God, and no man can serve two masters, he must either hate the one and love the other, or he must love the one and despise the other. No one can serve God and Mammon (which is the world) at the same time. This is the doctrine laid down for men’s guidance.

But what is the practice? Doctrine is theory. Is this devotion reduced to practice? Alas, I fear not! I fear many foolishly flatter themselves that they can divide their allegiance, and while conforming to the habits and practices of the world, persuade themselves that they can be, at the same time, on the way to salvation, if they preserve the mere exterior decorum of religion. Tell me, were you appointed an impartial judge of men’s actions, without, let us suppose, any previous knowledge of those divine principles which should guide them, would you, or could you, say that this antagonism, with which God obliges them to regard the world, is one by which they are governed? Assuredly not. On the contrary, to a thinking mind, it seems as though this principle, eternal and immutable as God Himself, were about to be, or had already been, repealed.

In these days of a false civilization, progress attracts the greater portion of men's attention. Pomp and fashion are passwords. Every nerve is strained, and every means tried to please the vitiated taste, and satisfy a morbid passion for pleasure. On this account did not Faith teach us otherwise, and had we not the divine word itself to the contrary, we should certainly be led to conclude that the Almighty had altered His designs, and that man's happiness consisted in seeking and enjoying the pleasures of the earth. This is certainly no exaggeration. Examine it yourselves. How few, I ask you, are they who habitually observe the known law of God? And even among ourselves, how many who, in their youth religiously educated, now turn aside from religion and go their way, afraid of the sneer of the infidel; or, being cowards, desire to escape the scoff of the libertine. Neither is this an exaggeration. You yourselves know it, and you cannot remember it too often for your own benefit and direction.

But Almighty God does not change like mortal man, and though man may transgress and despise the law given to him for his guidance, nevertheless it remains a perpetual reproach to his guilty acts, and as the standard by which he shall be finally judged.

The same God who commanded the Israelites of old to abstain from any intercourse with the heathen, renewed the same precept through the lips of His beloved Son, and from Him did the inspired Apostle receive the words of my text: "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him."

The first and chief reason why we must not love the world is, because it is the enemy of God. There are also many other reasons, personal to ourselves, and which we shall endeavor to review afterwards, in a brief manner.

You may naturally ask, What is the world? What did our blessed Lord signify when He told us not to love it? That world whose peace He pronounced so opposite to the peace which He Himself left His children; that world against which He warned His Apostles as their enemy, which

hated Him and His prophets, and which (He said) would hate them also; that world which He never wearied of denouncing; which He even expressly excluded from His last prayer, at the very moment when His Sacred Heart was overflowing with love; that world against which His disciples battled, whose wisdom they declared folly, and whose friendship makes enemies to God.

Alas, that it should include the majority of men! That it should reckon among its most devoted followers so many thousands who prostitute their talents to its service! Who are satisfied to receive in return its vain, miserable flattery! So it is, however, for "wide is the gate, and broad the way."

The word "world," in the sense of our text, does not mean precisely the material world as created by God. Neither is it restricted to those who openly profess a system of principles in direct opposition to Faith and morals. It embraces those thousands and tens of thousands, who, while they profess a belief in the truths of God, yet, through attachment to unlawful pleasures, or undue attachment to lawful pleasures, neglect to observe this law. It comprises within its number those who, occupied with ambitious thoughts, are unwilling to walk in the narrow way which "leads to life." It claims as its children those who are brought up in pride, and have no other law but fashion, no other object but the admiration of men, who pass their lives in idleness and sensuality, looking for the greatest comfort, and avoiding whatever may give them the smallest pain or annoyance. Lastly, it includes those who, dependent on others, sacrifice their conscience rather than displease them.

Understanding thus what is meant by the world, you cannot but see that it is the enemy of God. But let us, for a few moments, investigate the peculiar traits and tendencies of this world of the present day. There are to be found men who openly profess atheism, men who declare they have no particular attachment to any religion, who seem to be drifting into idolatry and paganism. When people reject all authority except what they themselves wish, when they set aside the law of God, and attempt to substitute in its place the fancies and absurdities of a mortal man, who by his

blasphemy and endeavors to humanize God, pleases and deludes them, what is this? Is not this setting up the Golden Calf of human ingenuity or eloquence, and prostrating before it, as their God? Certainly this is a species of idolatry, more injurious to our age than the adoration of stone idols, for men are too enlightened now to adore as God the works of their own hands. But they can be very easily deceived by an impostor, who, while he pretends to preach the truth of God, is gradually rooting out of their minds and hearts every vestige of the supernatural which remains there. Hence it is scarcely necessary to say that he who loves principles such as these, is, and must necessarily be, an enemy of God.

Nor are the principles which guide the rest of those enumerated among worldlings less dangerous to a life of virtue, though they may not so directly attack religion. What is the first condition which a profligate requires in a companion? Is it not that he must abandon religion? That he must join in his ridicule of the pious and virtuous? That he must be prepared to participate in revels and debaucheries not fit for the light of day? That he must renounce all inclination to devotion, that his tongue must become the vehicle of the foulest language, and swear at everything with unbridled license? Ask the young man, who a few years ago had been his parents' hope, but whose reckless, dissolute life has already brought sorrow to his family, ask him what has been the cause of this? He will tell you of an evil hour when bad companions crossed his path, how they laughed at his modesty and love of virtue, and called him a fool. He will tell you how his upright mind at first resisted, but at length gave way to their repeated taunts. He will tell you how he became a drunkard, or immoral, or, perhaps, both together; he will tell you how he blushed as he heard the first obscene word pronounced in his hearing, and how he almost trembled as it crossed his own lips for the first time; but he will also tell you how, when that holy shame, the natural bulwark, the veil which God has given to modesty, was rudely torn away, how he gradually went from bad to worse, until he became a prey to filthy passion, hardened in crime, and engulfed in vice.

Ah, it is not necessary to tell you that the world which begets such fruit as this is the enemy of God.

Nor are the other principles I have mentioned less opposed to the honor of God. There is nothing more calculated to destroy the foundations of society than observing the extravagant demands of a corrupt world. It is one thing to be decent and agreeable; these are qualities which every true Christian is supposed to possess, for Christianity evokes and exhibits all the truly gentle and refined qualities in human nature. But to follow the demands and the fashion of the world as far as they lead is forbidden to those who wish to live according to the maxims of the Gospel. Who has not noticed the inversive tendency of mankind? In former days there were deeds of such heroism performed, deeds which men of our times scarcely think credible. And why? Because the world has produced such effeminacy among them. On the other hand, in those days, the duties of women were faithfully observed; children were trained in morality and in religion; and by the influence of modest women society was in a great measure guarded from destruction. I do not mean to say that this age is without such a purifying element. No, God forbid, for there are many, even thousands, in the midst of and surrounded by the vanities of the world, who contrast favorably with those of any other age. Neither do I mean to say that at all times and in all places in the past Christian society was entirely free from overweening indulgence in pride and fashion. But I say that, wherever society became corrupt, the cause of its corruption might be traced with justice to the idolatry of the pride of life and the fashion of the world.

And tell me how many individuals could trace the destruction of the kingdom of God in their souls to the idol of the world's fashions to-day? How many who, while they despised their practices, were a source of great edification in the circle of their acquaintance, but when once they overstepped the boundary line, and did not recall the unwary step, gradually lost their religious spirit? Pious practices were then discontinued. They had no more time, and what is worse, no more liking for such. They set up the world and the fashions of the world in their hearts. They threw

off religious restraint, so that they might be more free in their practices, and at length became stumbling-blocks of impiety to their neighbors. Nor is this exaggeration. Any one who knows anything of the inner workings of society, or whose duty it is to observe it, knows that this is the sad history of many a good child.

How could it be otherwise? The heart of man is prone to evil from his youth; and if he does not keep the principles which lead to God firmly fixed before him, those which lead from God will claim his service, for the war between them both is a perpetual war, one in which the slightest step to either side is turned to advantage. The heart of man is limited, and it can hold only one God, and if that God is the true and living God, it shall have nothing to say to His enemy; but if that god be the idol of the world's fashion, to which it has built a temple within its secret recesses, then it is called on for the most complete subjection, the most undivided attention. There is then no time to adore God, and what is still worse, there is no place for Him. For "what has God in common with Baal?" God is a jealous God, and He will not accept our miserable service, if we share it with His enemy.

Behold, then, this other species of idolatry, so universal at present. Guard against it, and while conforming to the requirements of decency, and to the customs of a healthy civilization, avoid the demon of the extravagant fashions of this degenerate age in which we live. The principles which the last class adopts are also opposed to the honor of God, and therefore must be considered His enemy.

These principles are when people are ready to sacrifice their consciences rather than displease others whose favors they desire or require, and whose friendship they wish to possess. This is another kind of idolatry, the idolatry of human respect and public opinion, so prevalent in these days. When public opinion is founded on the law of God, and when respect or deference to our fellow-men is consistent with our duty to God, then it is lawful to coincide and to give it; but when respect for a man implies infidelity to God, and public opinion is simply the expression of a false principle, or the unlawful demand of a corrupt society, then

he must answer as St. Paul did when he was commanded by the Roman Prefect to preach no more: "God must be obeyed before man."

This idol of human respect is not less an enemy of God than those other principles which we have reviewed. It was this human respect and worship of human opinion which induced Pilate to crucify Jesus Christ, for he confessed he found Him innocent of the charges preferred against Him. "I find no cause in Him."

But when the Jews said that therefore he could be no friend of Cæsar, he gave way immediately, and washed his hands, as though this ceremony could justify his crime. This is the tyrant principle which prevents many men from retracing their steps when they have made one progressive move on the way of error. They fear to be thought ill of. They fear to confess they are wrong. How many criminals would repent were they above this demon of human respect! It was this which introduced and continued many heresies among society; made England change her religion three times; and now leaves her a prey to the direst discord. It has kept many a poor wanderer outside the Church of God, who acknowledged and believed that it alone contained the truth, but was not courageous enough to despise bigotry and prejudice, which force people to remain in error. How many good, holy, upright children have lost their rightful inheritance, for no other reason than because they became Catholics, despite human respect! How many parents give, as their only reason for disinheriting such children, that they have brought shame on their family, as if embracing the truth could be a shame! Nor can it be denied that there are, unhappily, cases of lukewarm Catholics, who, when in the society of non-Catholics, either are ashamed of their religion, or, if they say they are Catholics, declare they are liberal Catholics, and are so simply because they were brought up in the Catholic Faith. In fact, they lower themselves, for they are so mean and cowardly, and such idolaters of human respect, that they seem to wish to apologize for being Catholics at all. How many are there, who are ashamed to live as upright Catholics, because they think they will be laughed at or despised.

Human respect is, alas! one of the most pernicious evils of this age, and more especially in this country. It appears in every department of society, in every walk in life, and is pervading even the very youth in our midst. It stalks abroad, a hundred-headed hydra, with a face of brass, and speaking with the tongue of an infidel press. It is sapping the foundation of even natural religion, and eating, like a cancer, at the very heart of domestic and personal virtue.

It is the only moral law which men of the world acknowledge or try to obey. It rules even statesmen, and buys their consciences, as well as those of many others, at a very low price. I ask you, then, is not this an enemy of God? Is this not another idol which the world has set to displace God, or to preclude Him from dwelling in the heart of man? Certainly, and therefore it is your duty to avoid it, to despise it when it commands you to do what is displeasing to God, and to your conscience; despise it, for if any man loves it, the same is an enemy of God.

We have seen what is meant by the world, and how truly it is the enemy of God. We have seen how it sets up idols in the heart of man, to be adored instead of the true and living God. That it leads the unwary to infidelity, to paganism and the basest idolatry. That its idols are religions made by human hands, and changed at pleasure. That it degrades its victim to a state of profligacy which supposes slavery of the lowest and most animal character; changing man into a beast, and then adoring the beast which he himself set up. It leads to a frivolous love of extravagant fashion, the origin of so many evils, and the sure foe to every noble and magnanimous thought of the mind, as well as the destroyer of every religious impulse or sentiment. Lastly, it leads to the despotic tyranny of a corrupt public opinion or human respect.

Now, you have these before your minds, and you have seen the evils they beget. I entreat you, then, as you love your souls, beware of them. In this Holy Season of Lent, when we are supposed to renew our energy and to proclaim war anew against the enemies of God and of our souls, protest and promise that you will never make a truce nor a covenant with this world which I have put before you.

Parents, set an example of Christian self-denial and virtue to the children whom God has given to your charge; guard them from the snares of the world, and instil into their innocent minds principles which will guide them when you have passed away forever.

Children, avoid those evil companions whose conversation leads to the idolatry of the world. Begin in your youth those salutary habits of virtue, which alone will save you in the tide of human passion. Young man, and young woman, keep from those places which you know lead you from God, and deprave your heart. To all, I say, love God, fear God, keep His Commandments and those of His Church, and you will have nothing in common with the principles of the world, which is one of the great enemies of God.

THE VAIN PROMISES OF THE WORLD

A LENTEN SERMON

IN THE preceding discourse on the world as the enemy of God, I endeavored to point out to you its signification. I told you that to love the world was an act of the worst species of idolatry. That the idols of the worldling were, first, a human religion, which, I believe, could have no inducements for you. Secondly, a love of fleeting pleasure, which, when inordinate, makes us forget our duty to God. Thirdly, a love of the pride and an attachment to the extravagant fashions of the world, which close up in the soul every avenue of inspiration and grace; and lastly, the worship of human respect and public opinion which so often sway men in their actions, even to the forgetfulness of their duty to God.

We now come to examine these idols; to see what they are, even in their best appearances; to determine what they give us, even in their most acceptable forms, and to inquire whether the goods we purchase of them are worth the price we pay for them, or not.

In the first place, the world, asking our service, promises goods which are useless, and very often fictitious. When the demon, with the permission of the Son of God, led Him up to the top of the mountain, he showed Him, the Scripture tells us, all the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory, and said to Him, "All these will I give Thee, if, falling down, Thou wilt adore me." Now, in doing this, the demon proved himself to be a very great liar, for he could not give Him all the possessions of the world, since he had no such power, and even had he the power he could not give them; for by doing so, he would deprive many of his most faithful adherents of their reward. Is not this promise of the ly-

ing demon a fac-simile, a correct representation, of the promise which the world frequently holds out to those who idolize it? How many young men, in the beginning of their lives, had brilliant prospects before them. Everything which presented itself to their view was to be theirs. They aspired to the highest station, and to reach this apparently fixed end and goal, they removed everything in their way, even remorse of conscience. But when at length every step was ascended except the last, suddenly the object vanished out of sight, or they themselves became the victims of their overtaxed energies, or the ambition and hatred of other individuals, similarly aspiring to the same end. Thus it is, that, after a peaceful mind, a peaceful conscience, nay, the welfare of the soul itself, are sacrificed, our brightest worldly hopes are instantly blasted, as an air-bubble before the wind.

Ah! Yes! The world is a liar; it could be nothing else—for God is truth, and the world is the enemy of God. Yet it cannot be denied that there have been many, who, infatuated by its delusive promises, struggled in its service up to the very moment of disappointment, and then, in despair, ended their existence, hurrying themselves before the face of that God whom they had never served, and whose friendship they had sold for the false friendship of the world!

But even suppose the world keeps its word, as it sometimes pretends to do, in order to allure others to the bait. What does it offer? When the demon spoke to Eve, he said, "You will be as God by eating this fruit," and Eve "saw that it was good to eat," and therefore she took it. Understand, that the demon not only showed her that its looks were good but that it was very good to eat. "She saw that it was good to eat." Now, how could Eve know by looking at it that the fruit was good to eat? Certainly, she did not know, for only by the taste could it be judged. But the demon lied again, and deluded Eve. And when she did eat, when she lost, by this act, her right to heaven, did she become like to God? Certainly not, and when she and Adam found their mistake they hid from the face of God. But Almighty God, as if in sarcasm, called out, and asked, "Where art thou?" as though He intimated, "Adam, thou hast sinned against Me,

thou hast obeyed the demon. Tell me, if thy position has been improved by thy crime?" Ah, yes, to the eye, every worldly good seems fair. But when possessed it adds not one item of contentment or happiness to our former state, and very frequently, with the change of circumstances comes also a change for the worse in our peace of mind.

It is an old proverb that "All is not gold that glitters," and that even a royal crown will not gild the days of man with more happiness than the cottager or peasant finds in his humble home. How many examples there are of this fact. Frequently, and often, perhaps, in vain, has the example of Solomon been set before us. He had possessions and wealth, which, if ever they could satisfy, should have satisfied him completely. But no. To use his own words, "All things whatsoever my eyes longed for, I did not deny them; neither did I prohibit my heart the enjoyment and the delight of those things which I prepared. But I saw in all vanity, and affliction of soul." And again he says, "I turned and beheld other (states) and I saw the calamities which took place; the tears of the innocent, and no one to console them; and I praised the dead rather than the living; and more happy than both I considered him who was not yet born, and therefore had not seen the evils which exist in the world." Behold, a true estimate of the very climax of the world's grandeur and of its pleasures!

But if you wish to have a more modern example of the value of the greatest positions of the world, you can select them in abundance, without referring to Scripture at all. Shall the first be a king? Well, Philip of Spain, on his death-bed, a time when a correct view is likely to be taken of past events, exclaimed to the bystanders, "Oh, that instead of a king's crown I had worn the cowl of a humble monk in some obscure monastery!" Shall the next be a statesman? The celebrated Wolsey, famous in English history, addressing Cromwell before his death, said, "Would I had served my God as well as I have served my king! I should die in peace." Shall it be a warrior? Napoleon, the greatest general of modern ages, who was a terror to kings and emperors, and who made Europe, for a time, tremble at his feet, is said, on one occasion, to have given utterance to the following

remarkable sentence: "The happiest day of my life was the day of my First Communion."

Thus you perceive the value that the wealthiest, the most exalted, and the most famous personages set on the deceitful flattery of this lying world. Another instance may be mentioned. A certain king, Antigonus, once said to his son, "The royal dignity is a splendid slavery. If it were known with how many evils and misfortunes it is filled, no one would take it, even did he see it on the ground."

But let us not forget that we are not offered such flattering promises as these by the world, and therefore, what we receive must be in proportion more worthless still; for what is the ordinary sinner, the ordinary idolater of the world offered in requital for his service? He is told he will make a show of some consequence; but, foolish man! No one thinks about him half as much as he thinks about himself; and people shake their heads in his absence, and say he is self-sufficient and unwise. He is offered a small sum of money, as Eve was offered the apple; as Judas was offered the thirty miserable pieces of silver; and of what use will this be to him in a few years? Will those to whom he leaves it care much for his memory? They will care, perhaps, as the world generally does. They may hurry him to his grave in a gilded coffin, followed by what the world thinks much of, a decent funeral, but that will probably end their recollection of him. Perhaps not even once will they have Mass offered for his soul. Perhaps never in their lives will they say five "Hail Marys" for his eternal repose. Perhaps they will even make a bargain over his dead body, and try to have it consigned to the grave as cheaply as they can, so that they may not lessen even his own gift to them!

This is the friendship of the world. This is the way in which it rewards its foolish votaries, and hence the Psalmist says, "Oh, ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanities, and seek after lying?"

But not even so much does the sinner, or the world's idolater, sometimes receive for his services. Take, for instance, the drunkard and the profligate, or the lover of extravagant fashion. What, I ask you, do they receive? The drunkard is offered the pleasure of his intoxication, the low,

strange honor and pleasure of becoming a beast, and he is so blinded by the world's offer, he is of such a mean and grovelling disposition that he extends his hand and says, "Yes, I am satisfied to become a beast, provided I shall have a little pleasure in the process of transformation." He takes the miserable overdose, and then receives his reward. He becomes like a beast, and, in fact, worse, for he cannot move out of danger.

Is the profligate any better than the drunkard? No, for if there is a contemptible being on earth, he is the most contemptible; a slave of the lowest kind; chained by the ties of low passion; a mean, cowardly fellow, who is afraid even of his own shadow, and incapable of any act worthy of a man; a coward, who has not even courage to ask the grace of God to rescue him from the mire in which he is wallowing. He knows he is on the road to destruction, soul and body, and yet he allows the world to blind him, to hush the warning voice of his conscience, to allure him on and on, until the chasm of hell yawns beneath his feet to receive him, where he is punished with everlasting torture for defiling the temple of the Holy Ghost.

But what does the idolater of the world's fashion receive as a recompense? The swift and specious pleasure of a few years' frivolous life. The vain, childish satisfaction of being admired for a short time, and then disappearing from the sight of men. "This I know," says the Sacred Text, "that the praise of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite like to a point, or a dream, which on awakening, has passed away." Every future pleasure seems the one which at last will satisfy, and every succeeding vanity expected to surely please, but when these are experienced, the individual is as far from contentment as ever, until at length days and years are spent in folly, vainly searching for a true peace and happiness, where none are to be found.

And now, what price is paid for all these miserable vanities? We have to buy them all at our own expense, like to the demon who, in endeavoring to tempt the Son of God, said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, speak that these stones may be changed into bread." He did not even attempt to satisfy our divine Lord Himself, but required that He

would refresh Himself at His own expense. Thus, also, does he exhibit to our mind the wealth, riches, and pleasure of the world, but they must be purchased at a great price, and at our own expense, both spiritually and with much temporal labor.

There is no slavery so great as that which the world requires from those whom it employs. They must be satisfied to lose their peace of mind, and to serve the world so blindly that not even their good name, nor their honor, nor their lives, nor hell itself, will deter them from their onward career. They are, in fine, promised what the demon promised Our Lord, and on the same conditions, *viz.*, "All these things will I give Thee, if, falling down, Thou wilt adore me."

And willingly do they fall down and give to the enemy himself the homage which is due only to God, and this they do for the trifling, brief, transitory, and fictitious pleasures we have reviewed.

But greater still is the expense, for by making the world their idol, they necessarily become enemies of God, and consequently must pay for their idolatry with the loss of their immortal souls, of everlasting peace and of unspeakable happiness among the angels, forever.

Here, then, may be observed the sad result of serving the world. On the other hand, the servant of God is more happy, even in this life. For he only is truly happy who loves God and serves Him. "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity—except to love God, and serve Him alone."

The human heart is like a delicately formed machine, which if any portion be incomplete or insecure, or not properly fixed and calculated to accomplish the chief end for which it was invented, becomes useless. Unless the heart of man be directed toward God as its chief end, and be made to follow its aspirations under His directing power, influence, and grace, there can be no happiness for it. All its machinery goes wrong, and it becomes useless to its possessor. There may be a momentary enjoyment, but there is no solid peace, even on earth. But when regulated according to the law of God, contentment and real happiness follow. Again, there is no man so capable of noble deeds as the man who

truly loves God; no man who, in the hour of danger, is more intrepid; no man more independent, because he enjoys the freedom of the children of God. So that, even looking at things from a temporal point of view, the love of God repays better than the service of the world.

In this Holy Season, then, when we are expected to prepare anew for the combat in which we have ever to be engaged while on earth, let us set before our eyes the falsity and the fleetingness of the world's pleasures and promises, the loss we sustain in serving it, and the tyranny with which it rules its wretched slaves. We promised, at our Baptism, to renounce its allurements, and let us now renew our vow that we renounce it with all its pomps forever; that we declare a perpetual war against it, and that we shall make no compromise with it until we have finally merited the sweet peace of the children of God in heaven.

WHY WE SHOULD HATE SIN AND LOVE VIRTUE

A LENTEN SERMON

“O ye sons of men, how long will ye be dull of heart? Why do ye love vanity and seek after lying?” (Psalms iv. 3).

THE Holy Season of Lent is a time of special interest to us. It is a time of universal humiliation, of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, which the Church sets apart for the benefit of her children; a time of general retreat, during which every Christian is supposed to examine more closely than usual the state of his soul. It is like a soldier's drill-ground, whereon he learns the art of warfare and prayer, with caution for the incursions of the enemy.

During this holy time we are supposed to take an exact view of the tendency of our lives; to correct what is evil, and to foster and increase what may be good. It is during times like these that Almighty God speaks to men's hearts in His most warning voice, after they have laid aside for a time the frivolity and cares of life and betake themselves to the solitude of meditation and penance. For let us not forget, there are those who are so deaf to their own welfare that no ordinary season of grace will affect them.

So is it with men generally. Only when they are brought face to face with their guilty consciences, and see plainly in them the heinousness of their crimes, do they take the resolve of changing their lives.

This is such a season. During this time, men, chastising themselves, are induced to see things as they really are; and under such influences we come to ask ourselves the question: What is it that induces people generally to serve Mammon and Satan rather than the true and living God? What are the impediments to the serving of God? What is the first cause why they leave the service of God for that of

His enemy? It is because the way of virtue is difficult. For let us not deceive ourselves—virtue is admired by all, even by the vicious; the virtuous man is esteemed, even by the greatest profligates. Therefore it cannot be hatred of a life which right reason tells a man in his sober moments is the proper one, that prevents one from embracing and following it.

The cause is found in the difficulty with which a virtuous life is beset. Man, since the Fall, instead of being inclined to supernatural objects, naturally looks after the fleeting pleasures of this world, and turns away from those things which belong only to the higher life.

In other words, the love of earth and its goods, or the way of sin, is downward, while the way of virtue is upward, and constantly opposing nature. The way to heaven is narrow and rugged and beset with thorns, but that which leads to earth and sin is full of sensual indulgence and satisfaction, and is very broad.

Few, comparatively speaking, undertake the difficulties of the one, while many traverse the broad ways of the other. "For many are called, but few are chosen." "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away." "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are that go in thereat." Hence, as a person descends from any position much more easily than he ascends, as the archer misses his aim more easily than he reaches it, so also is the virtuous life lived with more difficulty than the life of sin. Hence it is that we become good very slowly, while, on the other hand, we can become bad easily. Become familiar with a bad man, and you will adopt some of his habits; become acquainted with a holy man, and you will not so easily become a saint.

"A little absinthe," says St. Gregory, "diffuses its bitterness through a quantity of honey, but the contrary is not the case." One day a lewd woman accosted Socrates, and jeeringly said to him, "I excel you by a great deal—you cannot attract any of my followers from me, while I can at pleasure draw away all of your followers." "That is not surprising," replied Socrates, "for you draw your followers down a precipice, while I lead mine to virtue, the way to which is very steep and quite unknown to many." This,

then, is the cause why so many are deterred from a life of virtue.

But it is only in the beginning that the bitterness of a virtuous life is chiefly felt; gradually the way becomes more cheerful, and if not pleasing to flesh and blood, yet it is full of refreshing influences for the soul.

Man might be excused in the choice he makes of evil instead of virtue, if he were not gifted with reason, and if he were not superior to the brute beast, that is led only by instinct. But man, endowed with reason, knowing that a life of virtue, though so bitter, and so hard to be sustained, is the only real happiness he can possess, is the only worthy object of his life here, and of his end hereafter, becomes inexcusable in the sight of God, when he makes a life of vice and sin his choice. Should he advance the objection that a life of virtue is too difficult, I ask him, why does he not try to overcome the difficulties which he sees on the path to virtue? He overcomes all sorts of difficulties, performs great labor, and incurs great expense to increase his wealth; he considers no risk too daring to advance his interests in the world. He knows no good is acquired without labor, and virtue, that priceless gem, which serves to adorn the human soul, and embellishes it with the richest ornaments it can possess, and which makes man the friend of God, and the object of veneration of his fellow-men, certainly cannot be acquired without the employment of all our energies and the full surrender of all our will.

And why should this sacrifice dispirit a man? Is it not a glorious work to overcome one's self? "Better is a man who overcomes himself than he who conquers cities." "God smiles upon the bold." And then Our Lord Himself has promised His assistance. "*Juste instat praecepte qui prae auxilio*" (St. Leo, XVI. Sermon.).

The next reason which might be assigned for the abandonment of virtue, and the attachment to sin and vice, is that man, being of a sensuous nature, apprehends only imperfectly and confusedly those things which are purely spiritual, while those which are temporal, and subject to his senses, he apprehends more fully. To this add the darkness of intellect and inclination to evil he received at the Fall, and you

will understand that he is swayed much more strongly by those things which are tangible to his senses than by those which transcend the sphere of his senses, and which he very lightly and only obscurely apprehends.

For it is a principle in philosophy that "attachment follows apprehension." Having therefore experienced some passing pleasure or sweetness in some earthly good, we are generally led astray as to its real worth, or inclined to exaggerate it, while if we find a little bitterness in a virtuous life, we feel inclined to shrink from it, and give it up. I speak now of a man not guided and ruled by reason and religion. To such a man any kind of excess is possible. He is, to all purposes, an animal. His senses are his guide, his instincts are animal instincts. The order of nature is entirely changed in his life. The senses rule, and reason is subject, and even to this slavery he becomes so accustomed as to desire it. It is remarkable that so accustomed had the Jewish people become to their bondage in Egypt that they left it with regret, degrading though it was, and that often in the desert, though fed with the manna from heaven, they desired to return, and longed for the meats they had had served up to them when slaves to Pharaoh. Such is animal nature. Man, though Faith and reason prohibit it, commits sin because of the attraction of the senses, and having once become accustomed to sensual pleasures, with difficulty indeed is he induced to abandon them for the pure delights of God's service. St. Augustine remarks in his Confessions the severe struggle he had with his carnal appetites, when he became converted and resolved to live a life of chastity. "Mere trifles kept me back." Yes, even Augustine, a philosopher, was attacked, and by what? Mere vanities. But hear how he regretted this folly. "O Beauty, ever ancient, and always new, too late have I known thee, too late have I loved thee!"

Ah, what folly to be allured by a shadow! What folly to seek a pleasure that we know will become full of bitterness to us; for the pleasures of sin, and the unlawful pleasures and objects of the senses are always of short duration, and very bitter.

"The triumphing of the wicked is short, though the wick-

edness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, and keep it within his mouth, yet it is the gall of asps within him." So do we read in the Second Book of Kings, that Amnon was so allured by incestuous desires that he sinned with his own sister; but so abominable did the act become after its perpetration that the Scripture expressly says "He hated her with a hate much greater than the love wherewith he loved her." Thus it is always with sinful pleasure. It is like the fruit which is said to grow around the Dead Sea, "Fair to the eye, but ashes to the core." Thus must we always view virtue and vice, not like brute animals, but as beings endowed with reason, with intelligence, which judge of things not in their relation to sense, but in their relation to eternity. If we fear that we shall grow faint by the way, then we must set before us the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the saints, who lead us on to the end. We must remember that the pleasures of this life are not fit to be compared to the ineffable joy we shall experience when the contest with flesh and blood is over. That instead of judging by the senses we may be led to reflect on and love the things which transcend them.

The third reason which may be given why men abandon virtue and love vice, is that indulgence in sinful habits, though degrading, brings pleasure to flesh and blood, which, no matter how momentary and unreal, yet is present, while the reward of a virtuous life is one which we must chiefly expect hereafter. There is little doubt that the possession of a small good is looked on as better than the prospect of a greater one. But this is the case, and only can be the case reasonably when the latter is doubtful. The Prophet Osee chides the Hebrew people by comparing them to an experienced ox, who prefers to grind rather than sow the corn. For it was prohibited in the Old Law to muzzle the ox when grinding the corn, and thus he could eat it while grinding it, whereas in the other case he had to wait for the harvests. So it is with animal man. He prefers the small, false, and, in the end, bitter pleasures of sin for the present season, rather than look to an everlasting reward hereafter. The sinner seems infatuated by the appearance of his present pleasures, by the reward of this world's goods, even as Balaam, and

though his conscience warns him, he yet follows his iniquitous path. What an example of this sad fact we have in the prophet Balaam! (Numbers, chapter xxii.) This wicked man, though he was forbidden expressly by Almighty God to put a stumbling-block in the way of his people, and though he pledged himself that he could do nothing against the "word of the Lord," was so allured by the presents which the messengers of King Balac brought him, that he shut his eyes to the promise. So it is with many men. They grasp at the goods of the present life at this side of Eternity, and, like the children of Ruben, desire not to cross the Jordan even to the Promised Land, because they are partially satisfied with the transient pleasures of this side, which seem good to them, but are not so in reality.

But have we nothing to offer in resistance to these temptations when they come before us, and by their presence and proximity to us try to attract us to them? Why should we deceive ourselves? Are we not Christians? And what is it to be a Christian? It is to be a follower of Jesus Christ. It is to inherit tribulation. "To inherit tribulation, to glory in the hope of the Son of God, to glory, even in tribulation." This is a characteristic of a Christian, that, while looking to an unspeakable reward hereafter, he must attain it by sufferings. No matter in what station; whether he inherits a crown, or is the child of a peasant, whether his days be passed in the silence, solitude, and obscurity of the cloister, or among the busy crowds that throng the thoroughfares of the land; whether looked up to and favored by the appreciation of men, or forgotten and unknown among the vast multitude of the human family, a Christian must be a man of mortification and self-denial, who carries his cross faithfully after Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Fasting and abstinence are virtuous deeds, and must be performed when commanded and when possible. But fasting and abstinence are only one kind of mortification, and even then useless, unless inspired by proper motives. The Lenten season is a season of penance, but the penance of the Christian can never end in this life. How is this? Is not that an act of penance which he performs when, warring against his carnal passions, he looks up to the pure delights

of the angels of God—and overcomes them? Is not that an act of penance which he performs when he is patient under insults and injuries? When he is just in the midst of injustice, as Lot was in Sodom? When he restrains his tongue from detraction and profane language? his eyes from bad books and pictures and evil objects in general? when he avoids that society which may be agreeable to flesh and blood, but which he knows will infallibly be destructive to virtue in his soul? Is it not an act of virtue and of penance to succor the distressed? Is it not an act of penance to be faithful to the observance of Sunday, no matter what may be the temptations to the contrary?

Ah, as these are acts of penance and mortification, therefore, when the pleasures of life are presented to us, let us not forget that it is only another opportunity we receive of proving ourselves Christians. “*Non habemus hinc manentem civitatem,*” says the Apostle. “But we look to the glory of the blessed God.” The fleeting and transitory things of earth are not worthy of a Christian’s love. It was not without meaning that St. John saw the Church under the form of a woman, clothed as the sun, while she had the moon beneath her feet. (Apoc., chapter xii.) She is so protected with the splendor of supernatural light that she may be said to be clothed as the sun, while the moon is beneath her feet because she is wont to despise those things which belong to earth. We must not, therefore, be led astray by the false joys of this world. We must despise them, and love nothing in common with them. Abraham said to the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah when offered presents, “I have lifted up my hand to the Lord, the Most High God, that I will not take anything that is thine.” The Lord, commending Abraham, said, “Fear not. I am thy Shield, and thy reward exceeding great.” How much better to await such a reward and labor for it, than to receive the reward of vicious lives here, which is false, and succeeded by everlasting punishment hereafter.

We have now examined the chief reasons which induce men to abandon lives of virtue and live vicious ones. We have examined them in the light of faith and reason. And we have seen, I trust, that they vanish as real obstacles when we view them properly. But let us not consider that virtue,

though hostile to flesh and blood, begets only bitterness here below. By no means. This is the saying of the wicked. The Lord protects His own as the apple of His eye. They enjoy the promise of a glorious reward, which promise the Apostle compares to an "anchor at sea." They are the only ones who can really use the goods of earth, because they are independent of them, while the vicious man is their slave. They enjoy that peace which surpasseth all understanding. As the Israelites in the desert were comforted and refreshed even at the hands of God Himself, so in the desert of this world, and amid the enemies of our salvation, Almighty God gives at intervals to His servants a foretaste of those spiritual joys which hereafter shall be theirs perpetually.

But it is only at death that we can truly discern the difference between a life of virtue and a life of sin. "Between him that serveth the Lord and him that serveth Him not" (Malach. iii).

We are told that when Antiochus at his death saw for the first time the evil of his vicious life, he saw also that it was too late. Let it not be so with us. Let our lives be lives of virtue, even at the cost of mortification. A crown awaits us. God encourages and assists us in our fight. Courage, then, fortitude and perseverance, and the victory is ours.

PENANCE

A SERMON FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

“Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. vi. 2).

It is the special characteristic of a mother who is true to her instincts to watch over her children with scrupulous and untiring care. Her love of her offspring, with which nature filled her maternal heart, makes them dear to her as the apple of her eye.

She jealously guards them in their infancy and childhood, she comforts and encourages them when fears beset their youth, she is solicitous for them even in their strength, and when sickness comes she stands by, always ready to dispense, both in word and work, the consolations which her tender love suggests. These are the traits of a good mother, and these traits we find realized, exactly and perfectly, in the guardianship of the Church of God, our spiritual mother.

For behold, from the time she impresses on us in Baptism the seal of her maternity, she leaves us not for a moment until she shuts our eyes to sleep the sleep of everlasting peace, and even then she remembers us in her prayers and supplications before God. She strengthens us in our pilgrimage with the spiritual food of her divine teaching and her Sacraments. She gives us daily new pledges of her affections, when we obey her precepts. And when, in a misguided moment, we stray from the path which she marks for us, even then she does not abandon us. She calls after us with a mother's importunity; she entreats and exhorts us to return, and puts before us every motive which her wisdom suggests, in order to save us from the destruction which we would bring on ourselves.

Thus it is that at one time she brings prominently to our

minds the love of Our Redeemer for us, in His birth, in His mysterious life, and His sorrowful death; at another, she presents to us the reward of a virtuous life. Now she reminds us of the strict and terrible judgments of God; and again, of the dread punishment of the unrepentant sinner. And to-day she calls us together to remind us of our origin, that we spring from the earth beneath our feet, and that we shall return to it again; that we are in this life only to merit a better one by our good works.

She calls to us to remind us of the words of the Apostle that "We have not here a permanent dwelling-place," that our true inheritance is heaven. To this end she puts ashes on our heads, which is a symbol of penance; and in doing so, she warns us not to forget the decree of God, the punishment of sin.

"Remember," she repeats, "and forget it not, that you are a child of Adam; that you have been formed of earth, and you must return to earth; remember, moreover, that this decree is a punishment (though in part only) of sin; and therefore, if you have transgressed the law of God, do penance, and defer it not, for 'Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation.'"

What is penance? Penance can be understood in different senses. It may mean the virtue of penance, or it may mean the Sacrament of Penance.

The Sacraments of the New Law, you are aware, have all been instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and hence, Penance as a Sacrament dates only since that day when our blessed Lord said to His Apostles, "As the Father hath sent Me, so also I send you . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

It is not our intention to speak of penance as a Sacrament. To-day being the first day of a season of mortification, we wish to put before you the necessity of penance as a virtue. As such, it is defined, "A virtue which inclines to sorrow for sin, and a desire to atone for the outrage which, by committing sin, we offer to God." You see from this that it includes two things, 1st, a sorrow for sin, and 2d, a desire to satisfy God's justice.

It is plain that it must include a sorrow for sin; because he who is not sorry for having offended God is, by the very fact of being of such a disposition, ready to offend Him again, and therefore could not be said to be penitent. And he who is not desirous of satisfying the offended justice of God as far as he is able, cannot be said to be sorry for sin, any more than he who commits a robbery can be said to regret it if he refuse to restore the stolen goods when able.

But, you may say, did not our blessed Lord, by His sufferings and death, satisfy the justice of God? Our blessed Lord certainly did merit Redemption, but His merits must be applied to our souls after the manner which He has appointed, and by our own good works.

As a virtue, penance has been, is, and ever shall be, the only way by which the sinner can obtain pardon, since it would be repugnant that God could forgive him who persistently perseveres in sin.

It was always necessary in the Old Law. When the first murderer (Cain) imbrued his hands in his brother's blood, and its cry of vengeance went up to heaven, Cain would have appeased the Lord, and he would have found mercy, did he do penance. But, despairing of pardon, and therefore unwilling to do penance, he was for all his life thereafter a fugitive on the earth, an object of horror to his brethren, with iniquity stamped upon his brow.

At various periods Almighty God chose special messengers to whom He gave the commission of preaching penance to His people. In their journeyings in the wilderness, the Israelites sinned frequently before God; Moses warned them and exhorted them to do penance; he himself grieved for their iniquity, and, prostrate before God, he importuned Him to forgive them. But it was only when they had done penance that He forgot their sins; for we read in Leviticus that they were to make offerings, "according to the estimate and measure of the offence, that they were to do penance for their sins, and that the priest was to pray to the Lord for them." Jonas preached penance to the Ninivites, threatening in the name of God the destruction of their city within ten days; but because they did penance Ninive was spared.

Nathan was sent to King David to announce the judg-

ments of God to him because he had sinned, and David repented of his sins, and therefore was he forgiven. "Therefore the Lord hath taken away thy sin." But, oh! What a penance was that of the Prophet King. Every word which proceeds from his lips breathes sorrow for sin; his sin was always before him; he grieved for it day and night; he tells us himself that "he mixed ashes with his food, and tears with his drink." Oh, that they who have imitated David in his sinning would also imitate him in his penance!

Again, Isaias preached to Juda and Jerusalem the necessity of doing penance for their crimes. "My soul hateth your solemnities," he says (speaking in the name of God); "they are become troublesome to me; I am weary of bearing them. . . Take away the evil of your devices from My eyes; cease to do perversely. Learn to do well . . . and then come and accuse Me, saith the Lord: if your sins be as scarlet they shall be made as white as snow; . . . but if you will not, and will provoke Me to wrath, the sword shall devour you because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaias i. 14, 18, 20).

Again, when the Jews fell away from the service of God, Jeremias was sent to preach penance to them: "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and thou shalt say: Return, O rebellious Israel, and I will not turn away My face from you . . . lest My indignation come forth like fire, and there be none that can quench it because of the wickedness of your thoughts." (Jer. iii. 12; iv. 4.) And when they hearkened not to the words of Jeremias, he sat and wept over Jerusalem, and foretold that a day would come when the enemy would despoil them of their possessions.

But not to multiply examples like these, I shall merely say that the preaching of penance was the mission of every prophet of the Old Law, of Osee, Micheas, Zacharias, and of Ezechiel; of Daniel, for he made supplications for the people; "with fasting, sackcloth and ashes."

And coming to the New Law, who was its precursor? John the Baptist, a preacher of penance. Clad in a garment of camel's hair, and feeding on locusts and wild honey, he exhorted the people to do penance.

But perhaps one may think, "Yes, penance certainly was

necessary under the Old Law, but perhaps it is not necessary in the New Law."

It is as necessary now as it ever was. God could not destroy the principle which requires us to do penance. He, or the Church which He has commissioned, may appoint or remove special times for penance, but not even God Himself could take away the necessity of penance as a virtue, as a condition to obtaining pardon for sin.

And hence it is in very deed one of the chief lessons taught us by our blessed Lord both in word and act. In His very first sermon He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

At one time He would say to the multitude, "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." At another, "Every tree which does not bear good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire." And, as in every virtue He is our model, and left us an example, so also did He set us the example of penance.

For what, let me ask you, was His whole life, from His humble birth to His death? Was it not a life of penance? Born in poverty, He lived unknown to men; and when the days of His mission arrived, He retired to the desert, and there fasted forty days and forty nights, communing with His Eternal Father; and hence, in memory of this fast of Our Lord, and after His blessed example, was the fast which we begin to-day instituted, in the very infancy of the Church, and ever since has been kept with more or less rigor, according as the wisdom of the Church directs.

For why should not the fast of Christ be common to all Christians? Why should not the members follow the head? For every act of His life was for us, and if we are unwilling to labor with Him in the work of our salvation, how can we expect the benefits which are derived from His merits?

Lastly, this necessity of penance He commanded His Apostles to teach, for we are taught it in various places in their writings. "If you indulge the deeds of the flesh, you shall die, but if you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live." So speaks St. Paul. "Be renewed," he says, "in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, in justice and

holiness." And, according to St. Peter, when God did not spare the rebellious angels, but hurled them into hell; when He spared not the world before the flood; when He spared not Sodom and Gomorrah; how much less will He spare those who in the New Law despise its authority?

And again, St. Paul: "Whosoever," he says, "made void the law of Moses was condemned to death without mercy before two or three witnesses. How much more, think you, does he merit punishment who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and defiled the blood of the New Testament in which he was sanctified?"

Besides all this it would be sufficient for us had we no other proof, to know that the Church in all ages and in all times has preached penance to her children, and for this purpose, that their good works may be the more acceptable.

She sets apart certain seasons in which all may join in one universal act of penance, to appease the justice of God. We know that her religious communities regard penance and mortification as an essential item in their constitution. We know that from time immemorial, hermits and solitaries set the world an example of mortification, and we even find that sometimes in the civil community a day of penance and fasting is set apart for some national purpose, thus recognizing mortification and penance as necessary to be reconciled with God.

It behooves us, therefore, to enter on this penitential season in the true spirit. I know, indeed, that this is an age of indulgence, and that people are only too prone to listen to the voice of flesh and blood excusing them from fasting, and sometimes even from abstinence.

But do not forget that fasting has been instituted to punish the body, and therefore inconvenience must necessarily be the result. Do not forget that it is not a matter of choice with us; if we are in the circumstances to fast, we are obliged to do so under pain of grievous sin. For as the civil law can oblige in conscience when necessary for the welfare of the community, so also, for a greater reason, every law of the Church in a grave matter.

Begin, therefore, this holy season with a proper spirit, giving up especially everything which is of itself incompatible

with the spirit of penance. Remember that the object of your work is to purify your heart, and hence avoid sin, and the occasions of sin, lest you may be likened to those who very carefully cleanse the outside, but never the inside of the cup; who did good works to please men, but of pleasing God made no account.

Do penance, solely to please God; let your mortification be directed by a pure intention, and accompanied by a spirit of recollection and prayer, which will render it acceptable in the sight of God.

DEATH, THE END OF ALL

IT is an expression not less true than universal that our life here on earth is very short, a mere passage to immortality, on which we make a portion of our journey every day, a mere probationary career, on the good or bad use of which depends our happiness or misery hereafter. Every Christian, having even but the most questionable claim to the title, accepts this truth, and yet, strange to say, there are many who live in such a manner, as though convinced, and as though desiring to manifest the conviction, that they should never leave the world. While they look to the termination of every other work with anxiety, they endeavor in various ways to banish the thought of death from their minds.

Every man in the world, from the greatest to the humblest, looks forward to the day when his labors shall be rewarded by good results. The industrious lawyer, when engaged in a serious case, scarcely allows himself repose, and even if he does, it is only to renew his strength, and refresh his mind, in order to be able to undertake his work with more vigor. The physician, if conscientious, will consult every volume in his possession to insure success in his practice. The poor mechanic labors during day and night, and very often for a little recompense. The husbandman watches the seasons, and provides against anything which might injure his crops. All, in one word, engage themselves with ceaseless energy in their several pursuits to make the issue prosperous. But in that one pursuit, the labor of salvation, the securing for themselves of a happy death, there seems to be manifested during their lives a marvellous apathy as general as the caution exercised in worldly cares.

It is related of the ancient Egyptians that at their feasts and banquetings, they always reserved a place for the image

of death, which was represented by a skeleton; but in after generations, their children, becoming more engrossed with the pleasures of their festive parties, lost sight of this precautionary practice, which their philosophic ancestors employed to restrain their inclinations from undue and excessive indulgences. They concealed the skeleton with drapery. They veiled the outlines of the face, and placed on its brow a chaplet of flowers, in order to destroy the intended effect. Is not this our practice in the present age, my dear brethren, while engaged in the ordinary customs of entombing departed friends? Does it not seem as if we desired to neutralize the effect of the sad ceremony? The poor, lifeless body, after being wrapped in rich drapery, is embedded in flowers, and afterwards enclosed in the most costly coffin we can afford, and buried, if possible, in a shrine of marble. Ah, yes! As the spirit of this worldly age increases, and as gold and silver dazzle our eyes, we are inclined to confine our care for the dead in the coffins, and to bury with them in the tomb the lesson which their death puts before us. We are more inclined to admire the art displayed in the solemn ceremony than induced to reflect on the quick transition and vanity of human life.

But however we may endeavor to conceal from ourselves our certain doom, the Word of God places it before us in a most emphatic and striking manner. No other truth is more insisted on from Genesis to Revelations, and justly so, for as our salvation is our most important duty, and as death decides our lot for eternity, so a happy death should be the object of our most earnest solicitude. Nothing, therefore, can be more unpardonable than our forgetfulness of death, and our want of preparation to meet it. Were there any excuse, it surely should be that the circumstances which surround us make us forget it; but instead of this being so, the contrary is precisely the case, for everything reminds us of it. "One man dieth strong and healthy, rich and happy; but another dieth in bitterness of soul, without any riches; and yet, they shall sleep together in the dust, and the earth shall cover them." Ah! Yes, how many generations have passed away since the punishment of his father's sin was exemplified in the death of Abel! How many times has the earth opened,

to take back to its bosom the last remnant of mortal man! Like the leaves of the trees, which annually bloom and wither, and finally drop away, so has generation succeeded generation of the human family. The past ages have sunk into the endless ocean of eternity, and the present is treading surely on their trackless course. Of those who live to-day, scarcely one was alive ninety years ago, and the same number of years to come, shall, doubtless, confine us all to our graves. Rich and poor, great and lowly, king and peasant, all alike must yield to the stroke of death.

In Nature, almost everything we look upon warns us of the approach of death. The sun, the moon, and stars appear and disappear alternately, thus reminding us of the passing swiftness of time. The trees and flowers spring up and bloom but to wither and decay, and teach us by their short existence that we, too, having come to maturity, shall depart with time.

And what, I ask, is the history of mankind from the day of Adam until the present? What are the archives of the oldest dynasties, or the annals of all the world combined? They are all like one great family record, on whose pages are inscribed the birth and death of every member of our race. Where are those who once extended the mighty Empire of Rome to Gaul and Britain? Where are those who ruled over its vast extent? Where are the Cæsars and Alexanders? What is become of those royal dynasties which once made such noise in the world? Where is the long line of Carlovingian names? There is one answer only. They are all buried in the tomb. Their bodies are moldered into clay. Their bones have already whitened and crumbled in atoms in the sun's rays, and their dust has been tossed about by the winds of heaven. It may be said of those great men, each left a name. But what is that? A name, which has, perhaps, consigned their memory to the execration of posterity, like that of many a tyrant of the old Roman Empire. It may be they are remembered as heroes, but of what advantage is this in the grave? It is only the death-knell of their transient, short-lived glory, and an additional torment to them if they have lost their souls. Such is the end of man, and thus we are reminded of it.

But we have a still more tangible reminder of the end and vanity of human life, in those cemeteries which we have occasion so frequently to visit, and, perhaps, without much spiritual advantage. Let us pass in imagination through that silent "City of the Dead." Meditate well on what you see. There lie the remains of many who were once like you. Some, perhaps, who trifled with their fleeting life; who rejected and banished the thought of death, but at length had to yield to its fatal blow, like powerless victims at the hands of an assassin. Read the inscriptions on the tombs, those tombs which should be monuments of affection, but which are very often only a meaningless display of vanity. What do these tell you? They speak to you in silence of what shall also be said of you, "He is dead!" But turn over that green sod which covers the grave; there, perhaps, is some one you knew or heard of during his life; his body was then clothed in the finest material; his pleasures were as great as he could wish; his riches were immense; he endeavored in every possible way to exhibit his pomp, and gratify his sensuality. What is the end of all? He who was the wealthy owner of large halls in life, is now shut up within a few feet of earth, too narrow for a living man to turn in; he who was surrounded by friends of the most delicate taste and sensibility; who entertained largely at banquets of the choicest viands; who turned aside in disgust at the very approach of the poor and miserable; this same mortal must now be content to dwell with the worm and the reptile for his sole companions. That body, once so delicately cared for, must now be covered up, lest it impregnate the surrounding air with the germs of disease. Those eyes which he abused are now shut forever to the light of day. Those hands, so tender and soft, are now nerveless and inanimate. Those lips and tongue, made to praise God, but which were, perhaps, defiled by cursing and impure language, have already disappeared and returned to dust. There perhaps you see a few scattered bones, but any attempt to trace the outlines of his form would be perfectly fruitless. He is not yet dead more than one short year, and behold what he has become! Oh, my God, is this the end of earthly grandeur? Is this the end of riches and splendor? Is this the last remnant of man after a few short years on earth?

Yes, this is the end of all mortals. Of the proud and the humble, the freeman and the slave. What, then, let me ask, is more unpardonable than to forget in any act of ours that we must die?

But possibly you may say to me, "I know quite well that I am to die, but at present I am young, healthy, and vigorous, and I shall therefore wait a little longer to think seriously of changing my manner of life. I fancy one so strong as I am is not going to die without sufficient warning." Ah! yes, how many have been deceived by this thought! How many have been carried before the tribunal of God in the midst of just such expectations, looking forward to a long life of pleasure and happiness! How many who indulged that fancy would now be glad to get a second opportunity to make an act of sincere sorrow for deferring their preparation for even one single moment of their lives! You tell me you expect a long life—but who has promised it to you? You may expect it, but your expectations may not be fulfilled. Have you the power in your own possession to prolong it? Has Almighty God promised you a long life, and least of all has He promised to prolong it, in order that you might continue to offend Him? If He has not, but has assured you that at the time when least expected He will come to summon you to justice; then your hopes are all groundless, unreasonable, and inexcusable. And why, tell me, do you flatter yourself with such hopes when every morning's sun witnesses the death of thousands, who on the day before were like to you, young, healthy, and vigorous? Remember that death makes no exception, and that no rank or age in life is secure. The wealthy and the young, the gay and talented as well as the aged, are numbered among its victims. There is no rule observed in its decimating influence. No regular course is marked by its footsteps, and when it approaches its advance is irresistible. Take up the daily journals for the past year, and even those of the present, and see how many, buoyant and hopeful as you are, have been added to the number of the dead within even a few months.

Where, then, is the foundation for your hope? You have none. Let us not deceive ourselves; even old age will bring

on the same delusive thoughts. The self-same love of this life will gradually draw us on, and in the self-same way, if we do not take care to provide without delay, and thus habituate ourselves to live, so as to be ready to meet death whenever it may come.

But if we extend the matter to its widest limits, and say that you are likely to get a warning before death comes; you are likely to be sick for some time before you die; even then, in that supposition, I say our carelessness in not preparing beforehand is unpardonable.

Remember, when I speak of an unprovided death, I do not mean a sudden death, which to some is an evidence of God's mercy, while to others it is the punishment which their criminal lives have merited. I mean that more ordinary death which the worldling dies, when, after a life of sin, or one during which he scarcely allowed himself a moment to think that God existed, so engrossed had been his heart and mind in the goods of the world. And tell me, what wise man would risk a matter of so great importance on such a miserable chance as this? Put off your preparation until that time! But St. Jerome says that of a hundred of such deaths, scarcely one is happy. Put off your preparation until sickness has prostrated you! No one, I am sure, who has ever witnessed the agonizing torture of the sick and dying would think of this. Imagine to yourselves one who has cared very little during life about his manner of living. Say he has lived thirty, forty, or fifty years, and during the greater portion of that time he has never examined his conscience seriously, nor approached the Tribunal of Penance. His habits have grown upon him until it seems a second nature to him to sin. His crimes seem to rise mountains high before his mind. Those thousands of evil thoughts, every one of which was a grievous sin; those thousands of evil words which passed his lips; those great injustices toward his neighbor, whom he has defrauded of his money, or his good name, or of both; all these are collected on one side of the balance, and on the other is the strict justice of God, who will "judge justices, and search Jerusalem with lamps." He knows he can obtain pardon if, with true sorrow and firm will to satisfy God's law, he makes his confession, but

he remembers, on the other hand, that he almost despised virtue, and even the Sacraments, when in health. How now can he change so suddenly? His contrition must not be servile—and tell me, can you suppose that he who sinned so long as his life lasted will now be so filled with God's grace and true salutary fear as to have the necessary dispositions? I doubt it. But he must get the benefit of the doubt. He must have the benefit of the Sacraments, even though their profanation be dreaded, for "*Sacramenta propter homines.*" He endeavors to make his confession, but, oh! how shall he remember the almost countless number of his crimes? Had he gone occasionally to the Sacraments, it would have been easy for him to do so. He makes an effort, but his head aches with dreadful pain. His tongue is parched with thirst. The priest scarcely catches one word, but rather than allow him to pass away without hope he gives him the absolution.

Had he the necessary dispositions? Who can tell? Only He who knows all things, and who does not ratify the sentence of the priest unless the dispositions were present! Have you ever assisted at the bedside of such a person as I have been describing? I have been at the deathbed of a just man, and in his sickness he exclaimed, "I am not able to make one act of sorrow!" How foolish to defer one's preparation until the hour of death! I have stood beside a person like to him of whom I have spoken, and when asked to prepare himself for his last end, he said he was not disposed. I have assisted another, who answered, "I have lived like a vagabond during my life, and do you think I am going to insult Almighty God now when I am about to die?" I have been with several others whose agony approached despair.

Be wise, then, and learn from the sad and hazardous circumstances which accompany such deaths to make due preparation for yours. "Work while there is light," says our blessed Lord, "for the night cometh when no man can work."

Would you die well you must live well, for "as a man lives, so shall he die." Would you enjoy the unspeakable happiness of a peaceful conscience, and a quiet mind on your death-bed, preserve a good conscience while you live. Would

you wait with hope in sickness for the moment of death, keep before your minds now the judgments of God; direct all your actions to Him; frequent His Sacraments; keep His Commandments; obey His law; and death will be for you the gate of everlasting bliss.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

A SERMON FOR GOOD FRIDAY

THERE is no Catholic to-day, capable of a reflex thought and possessing a lively faith, who is not absorbed in the great mystery of God's love as shown in His Passion; not one to whose heart our divine Lord has not already preached in silent but intelligible language, through the mournful ceremonies of the Church, a solemn discourse of His own.

To begin by saying that this is a day of surpassing interest for us would indeed be a very inadequate description of it, and yet, what more can we say, or how can we describe it? We are rendered mute at the very outset by the nature of the mystery which we are called on to contemplate. The Son of God died for us! How much is contained in these words! Died for us, not His friends, but His enemies. Died for us, the work of His own hands, who could not add one iota to His infinite glory. Died for us—purely, solely, entirely for our eternal happiness. Wonderful mystery!

It is related in our blessed Lord's life that a certain Jewish prince (named Nicodemus, the same that afterward entombed His sacred body) came to Him by night to be instructed. Our blessed Lord began His instruction with the doctrine of Baptism. "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (St. John iii. 5). Nicodemus, astonished at the strange words, and, as he thought, still more strange doctrine, seems to have hesitated, and, for a moment, at least, to have been anxious for an explanation, and hence he asked Him "How can these things be?" And our divine Lord, instead of satisfying the curiosity of Nicodemus, after chiding him, appealed in proof of His doctrine to this other great mystery, "For God so loved the world

as to give His only begotten Son." And if we, like Nicodemus, astonished at the mysteries presented to us to-day, should ask in perfect faith, "How can these things be?" our final and only reply would be found in the words of Our Lord, "For God so loved the world," to such an extent as that He did not spare His own beloved Son, but delivered Him up for us all. And as Jesus Christ, Our Lord, was the splendor of His Father's glory and the figure of His substance, so was He the mirror in which the love of His Eternal Father for us was reflected with the utmost fidelity. His love, equal in extent to that of His Father's for us, was also equally generous, and it is to this feature of the love of Our Lord that your attention is directed in this discourse.

In contemplating this day the generosity, the unselfishness, the excess, so to speak, of God's love, we shall try to observe the custom of faithful friends. You know with how much attention is celebrated the anniversary of the death of one who is dearly loved: those to whom that friend is dear make it an occasion of recollecting with affection the various incidents of his life. They traverse, either in reality or in spirit, every place in which he was wont to walk; they linger around certain well-known spots with a sort of fascinated thoughtfulness and intense feeling, because these in particular he loved to frequent. This is also what we purpose doing this evening. On this, the anniversary of our dearest Friend, our best Father, Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, we are come to remember and to talk over the extreme generosity of His love for us, and to recall certain incidents of His sacred life which are prominent evidences of this generosity.

By generosity (or generous love) we understand that quality of love which never allows self to interfere, or contemplates it, in the love of another. Generous love, a love which could have no interest in loving, but is solely entertained in the interest of the object toward whom it is directed.

That the love of our blessed Lord was such as this, even to excess, will be sufficiently manifest in the reflection that He did not need our salvation in order to increase or perfect His own glory. Being God, His glory was beyond such

needs, and therefore every act of the Son of God, made man, was necessarily an act of the most perfect benevolence. Every breath He drew, every sigh He heaved for our salvation, from His humble birth in Bethlehem to His death on Calvary, was an act of the purest, most generous love.

But it is not alone by abstract reasoning that we can convince ourselves of the pure generosity of the love of Jesus Christ, for in His whole life this quality of generosity stands out conspicuously in His words and acts. It pervades His life, it seems the spirit and source of every action, penetrating them all and connecting them, as it were, with a golden thread, brightening as it goes on, until on this blessed day He gave the last and greatest possible proof of His unselfish love; for according to His own words, "Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friend," and He gave His life, not alone for His friends, but also for His enemies; for those who crucified Him as well as for those who stood and wept in sympathy and sorrow at the foot of the cross.

(a) When the time of our blessed Lord's Passion came, He had spent on earth about three and thirty years. From His twelfth until His thirtieth (eighteen years), He lived almost unknown and forgotten among men, in the obscure village of Nazareth. His life during this period has no historian; there is nothing more narrated of Him than that "He lived with His mother and His foster-father and was subject to them," but in this very silence is contained the generosity with which He desired to conceal Himself until the hour of His mission arrived. In His thirtieth year He came forth in the fulness of growth to preach to men the New Law, the Gospel of love. For three years He fulfilled His mission with the most scrupulous exactitude, the greatest self-denial and unheard-of charity. Who can refrain from admiring the minuteness of detail which He observed on that mission? Never during those years did He omit or forego an opportunity of pursuing His work of love.

He came to bind the hearts of men rent asunder by sin and sorrow, and the history of His life is proof of His extreme fidelity. He addressed multitudes on the mountaintops in Judea, but He did not disdain in His generosity to

stop by the wayside to comfort the poor and to heal the sick. He preached pardon to thousands of penitents, but He received repentant sinners of every class to His sacred feet, and dismissed them with a sweet word of advice.

Never even once did a harsh word for a true penitent escape His sacred lips, but rather when condemned by men, He pleaded their cause, and cheered them on the way of repentance and virtue. Ah, yes! And even though in compassion He raised His omnipotent hand and miraculously fed His followers, it is recorded only once in Holy Scripture that He ever rested His weary limbs or refreshed Himself. And who can forget that once? Who can forget that the Son of God sat by the well of Sichar and asked a drink of water of a poor woman of Samaria, and rewarded her with a knowledge of the well of everlasting life?

Who can, again, forget the charity with which, amid the applause of men, He healed the woman who ran to touch the hem of His garment? Ah! these sweet traits of our blessed Lord's character would be sufficient to render even His memory dear to our hearts had we no other reason; but we are contemplating the generosity of His love, and these examples of it, though great indeed, are as nothing.

(b) As His missionary career was drawing to a close His anxiety for men's salvation became still more apparent. His followers became more numerous, and His sermons more frequent; He traveled over mountains and through valleys, His sacred feet bruised by the rugged stones of the earth. He labored for the souls of men during the day, and at night, when the world was at rest, and when He, too, might have rested His weary, sacred limbs, when the multitudes departed filled with the praise of His doctrine and miracles, He Himself, without thinking of His sufferings, withdrew to a neighboring mountain to pray, and to receive from His sweet communion with His Eternal Father fresh vigor to pursue His work of love.

Thus did our divine Lord spend the three years of His missionary life. With this self-sacrificing, generous love did He labor for men's souls. Behold, how He forgot *Himself*, and carried *us* in His Sacred Heart day and night! Who can tell how frequently He breathed our names to His Eternal

Father in those solitary moments when the world was at rest, and no one attended the Son of God save the angels who adored Him? This was truly generosity of love.

(c) But perhaps at the end of His life when He was about returning to the bosom of His Eternal Father, He forgot us; perhaps, at least as His last days approached, His love became less manifest. But no, we know the contrary; it was not enough that He was generous, generous during His life, He will be generous even in His last days. Now that He had propagated His Gospel as it pleased His divine mind, the time was come when He would seal all His sacred teachings with the sanction of His enduring love.

The time to celebrate the Jewish Pasch was at hand in the last year of His life, and our blessed Lord, who always observed the Jewish Law so faithfully (though not obliged to do so), would also celebrate this last passover. He met together with His Apostles in a room in Jerusalem to celebrate it, and here mark the endurance of His love. "When He loved His own, who were in the world, He loved them to the end." Never for a moment did that love falter or grow less; on the contrary, on this evening He is unable to conceal its excess any longer. As He enters that supper-room, He exclaims, in a transport of love, "With desire have I desired to eat this Pasch with you." Language seems to have failed the Son of God to express the intensity of His love, and therefore He repeats the same word to convey some idea of His meaning. Ah, yes! He had given many proofs during life, but now He would make a résumé of all. "He made a memorial of His wonderful work" in the institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Like to a faithful father, as His last hours approached, He gathered His children around Him to distribute His possessions, to make His last will and testament. Ah, yes! These are the moments when a fond father gives proof of his love to his children: he speaks in the most explicit terms, so that there is no doubt of his meaning; he gives them advice; he blesses them with all his heart. This, too, did our blessed Lord. He divided His possessions, but what were they? Himself! ("This is My body.") Oh, Prodigy of love! He wrote His last will, but how? In His own blood. "This is the new Testament

in My blood," etc. Miracle of generous love! He had veiled His divinity that men might not fear to approach Him on earth, but now He veils His divinity and humanity that He might be our spiritual strength.

He looked into the future; He saw the incredulity of some who would scoff at the miracle because they did not see with their own eyes and touch with their hands, just as they had already said even in His own hearing, "Is this not the son of Joseph, the carpenter?" He saw the insults and the outrages and the forgetfulness of bad Christians: He knew there would be times when the children of His choice would banish Him from His own temple, and put in His place the very beasts of the field. But all this He was willing to undergo in order to give consolation and strength to the few who would ever remember with gratitude His generous love.

(d) But His loving Heart is not yet satisfied. His Last Supper over, His possessions apportioned to His children unto the end of time, the Apostles ordained priests to be dispensers of His mysteries, He raises His eyes to heaven, and breathes a prayer which is a continued expression of love for His followers.

His Passion is at hand: His enemies have been preparing His death, even while He is exhausting every thought of His sacred mind to invent a last proof of His love. Will He not now, at least, think of Himself? No. He crosses the little brook Hedron, and with His three favored disciples enters the garden of Gethsemane where He has been accustomed to pray. Leaving the three, He withdrew the distance of a stone's throw, and there, prostrate on the earth, He poured forth His soul to His Eternal Father in prayer. Shall we leave God the Son to speak with God the Father, or shall we venture to approach Him as He is wrapped in profound prayer? It is growing late, and the world is at rest, except those who are plotting the death of the Lord. As He kneels, His head is bowed to the earth, and His blessed hands are clasped in prayer. What means that sorrow that evidently presses on the tender Heart of Jesus Christ? Can it be that His sufferings are so great that He is unable to bear them? We are answered by St. John, "Jesus, knowing all

things!" Yes, and not only all in His own Passion, but all things from the beginning to the end of time. On the one hand were the sufferings He had to endure for mankind; on the other, the malice and ingratitude of those for whom He was about to suffer. On one side was the great well of His own love; and on the other, the outrages and forgetfulness of men. There were present before His sacred mind the sins of the world, from the sin of Adam to the last of which man would ever be guilty. All the thoughts, words, and actions of all men individually and collectively, in all ages, and of all times. All those secret thoughts of every kind which corrupt the heart and make it an abomination to God, came before Him like an ocean of iniquity. All those crimes of every description and of every grade of malice, all the sins of injustice, of intoxication, of impurity, and of blasphemy, all, all, without exception, were laid on the shoulders of the innocent Son of God, that He might atone for them to His Father's offended justice! What a dreadful spectacle for Him who is inviolable sanctity, before whom the angels are not pure! What wonder, if overcome, as it were, by man's ingratitude, and by the great burden of these crimes, one of which would have been sufficient to make it necessary for Him to die, in order by His death to atone fully to His Father's justice, what wonder, I say, if His humanity seems to give way for a moment, and that His overwhelming grief finds expression in those extraordinary words: "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me," but His generous love adds, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt," and in the distressing anguish of His soul the blood oozed from His sacred body and bedewed the ground on which He knelt. Ah! have we reason to say that we were present, by our sins, on that memorable night before the sad gaze of the Son of God? Did we bring sorrow to this tender Heart by the black ingratitude of which the relapsing sinner is guilty; by the abuse of grace which His Passion merited for us?

There is a remarkable feature in the sufferings and Passion of our blessed Lord which brings out very forcibly the generosity of His love. That is, He endured it freely and willingly for us, notwithstanding that He had no human

consolation, and there was nothing throughout to relieve the indignity and cruelty and injustice with which He was treated. He was abandoned by His own chosen disciples. For here, even in the garden of Gethsemane, though He had asked His Apostles to watch and pray with Him, the Evangelist narrates that He returned after an hour and found them sleeping. And seeing the apparent carelessness, or at least the absence of interest manifested by them, He returned to His prayer. And again He came, and again He found Peter, James, and John asleep, and again He returned and repeated the self-same prayer. "And being in agony, He prayed the longer." Oh, what sadness must have been that of Our Lord! These were the three disciples to whom He had manifested His glory on Mount Thabor: Peter, to whom He gave charge of His Church; John, who rested on His bosom on that evening; and James, whom He also favored in a special manner; but none of them watched with Him. There is nothing, no pang greater to the heart, than to be abandoned in trouble by those whom we loved dearly, by those whom we favored in every possible manner. What then, must have been the pang of sorrow which pierced the heart of Jesus Christ, seeing Himself apparently neglected by those whom He loved so much? My dear brethren, are there moments when grief comes upon you, and suffering, and when there are few faithful friends? Turn your minds in those moments to our blessed Lord, toward Him who trod the wine-press alone, who had to drain the bitter cup of His sufferings without one drop of consolation. He is your model in every virtue, He must be your model in patience. He suffered that He might redress your sorrows, and if you ask Him for strength in your need He will not abandon you.

(e) But the Son of God was not only abandoned by His own Apostles, He was even sold by one of them; sold for thirty silver coins to His relentless enemies. Judas, having received his paltry reward, led the Jewish priests and the Jewish mob to the garden where he knew he would find Our Lord, and having come, he has the effrontery to approach the Son of God and embrace Him. But remember, it is far from an embrace of love. It is only a sign to His enemies to

seize and bind the innocent Lamb of God and lead Him away to death.

Which are we astonished at more? The perfidy of Judas or the meekness with which Our Lord condescends to endure the traitorous kiss? What lessons are contained in this for us! We see here that no state of sanctity short of confirmation in grace is so great as to preclude the possibility of falling into sin, even sin of the worst kind. Unhappy Judas was one of the twelve chosen disciples, chosen from among men by Our Lord, chosen as one of His dearest and most intimate friends. That night He had ordained Him, He had given Him to eat and drink of His own blessed body and blood. He had stooped to wash His feet with His own hands, and yet, behold how Judas treats Him! It is the ingratitude of the act of which Our Lord chiefly complains through His Prophet. Were it an enemy He could bear it—"But thou," said He, "the man of My peace, who didst eat sweet meats with Me." Oh, what a dreadful fall! And what was its motive? Avarice.

Let not the love of the world nor of its goods take possession of your hearts, for if it should, no crime would seem too great to commit in order to satisfy your inordinate wishes. And Judas, we are told, went and hanged himself in despair, because he had betrayed innocent blood; and this act, St. Jerome says, caused much more affliction to the Heart of Jesus Christ than even the crime of the traitor, for it was a direct outrage to His mercy and His generous love. But why, let us ask, did he not do penance? Mysterious reason. We would say, immediately, he had made a sacrilegious Communion, for there is no crime which tends more to harden the heart of a sinner than that of a sacrilegious Communion.

(f) But Our Lord was not only sold by Judas, one of the twelve, says the Evangelist, as if especially noting this fact, He was also abandoned by His other disciples. When seized by the mob, He meekly rebuked them with the unusual character of their approach, reminding them that He had been daily teaching in the Temple before the world, and now they came to apprehend Him as a robber. He looks back over His life, and He sees in it naught but a life spent in the interests of men. He knows that every thought of His

was suggested by love, generous love, for them. No wonder, then, that He should be afflicted at this treatment. But the Jews wished to make Him appear as a malefactor, and therefore they led Him bound to the High Priest. Meantime, all the disciples fled, except two, and one of these (John) even ran away, while the other, Peter, followed Him at a far distance, notwithstanding that he had already declared that he would never abandon Him. Our blessed Lord's Passion had begun.

I shall not attempt to describe the torture He endured that long night in the house of the High Priest. How can I describe the meekness of the Lamb of God, who allowed His own creatures, even some of the vilest rabble, to raise up their arms and strike Him cruelly on the face? He endured outrages and insults of every description, abandoned as He was by all. Peter, to be sure, went into the High Priest's house, but only to add to his shameful desertion the crime of denying on oath that he was a disciple of the Lord. He went into low company, and as is usual in such a case, betrayed Jesus Christ. He became afraid when asked whether he was a Galilean—but see the generous love of the Lord as He turned upon him a look of mercy. And Peter went forth, and “wept bitterly,” the Evangelist says. And it is said that the tears of Peter never ceased trickling down his cheeks until his death.

If we have imitated Peter by denying Our Lord by sin, let us at least imitate him in the great penance that he did for that sin.

The incarnate wisdom of God was mocked and derided. He was led from Caiaphas to Pilate, and from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate, with the additional indignity of having an old white garment put upon Him to make Him appear as a fool. He who created the heavens and the earth by one word of His omnipotence, was bound to a pillar and scourged, receiving, according to St. Bridget, about three thousand stripes. What an indignity! The modest Son of God stripped of His garments before the gaze of a vile mob! Why was this? For the vile impurities of mankind, for the shameless sins of men, the Son of God endured this shame.

His garments were put on while His wounds were yet bleeding, and cleaved unto His sacred flesh. He was placed beside a thief and a murderer, and shown to the people that they might choose between them, for it was the custom that a criminal would be released at this season. Crime of crimes! "Behold your king!" said Pilate. But the priests and scribes and crowd exclaimed, "Not Jesus, but Barab-bas! Away with Him! Let Him be crucified!" Then Pilate, going through a foolish ceremony, delivered the Son of God to be crucified. What an indignity that a murderer should be let free, and the Son of God condemned to death! And this by His own people! When Jesus Christ was led forth He was scarcely recognizable. The Prophet Isaias, centuries before, in a vision saw this cruel drama, and described it for us: "And we thought Him, as it were, a leper stricken by God." And why? The same Prophet gives us the reason. "He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed" (liii. 5). Ah, yes! He had spent His life for us, every thought of His Heart was for us, and now He would offer Himself in death for us.

The Jews, having obtained possession of our blessed Lord, laid on His bleeding shoulders the cross which they had prepared for the purpose. The mournful procession was formed, and Jesus Christ was hurried on with cruelty and brutality. It seems as though His enemies thought His life would be too short to have them expend their malice, and hence they increased their brutal ferocity. Weak from loss of blood, and the weight of that heavy cross, our blessed Lord fell three times on His way to death, but each time He was kicked and goaded on by His murderers until He was at length assisted by a stranger, Simon of Cyrene. You have too often followed the Son of God in spirit, I am sure, along that sad and painful journey, to need many words to make it interesting to you. There is one fact, however, which must not be omitted. We are told by sacred tradition that there was one of all others in that sorrowful procession whose heart was pierced with intensest grief. She, with a few companions, followed at some distance from Our Lord. She

scarcely dared to raise her modest head or eyes. Overcome with anguish, she was indeed interested in this awful tragedy. She had already closed the eyes of her faithful spouse, and now she was following her only Son to witness and be present at His death. What shall we say to comfort Mary, the Queen of martyrs, the Mother of sorrows, for it is she, Mary, the Mother of Jesus? What shall we say to that tender-hearted Mother who was moved by the sorrows of others to ask her Son to assist them when He was free? What shall we say to that spotless, sinless Virgin, who knew the love of her Son's Heart, His generous love for men; who knew the malice of sin and knew therefore the indignity and torture the Son of God, who was her Son, had to endure? To whom shall we compare, or to what shall we liken, her affliction, if not to that of her Son? There was a time during His life when that same Jesus, passing through the little village of Naim, saw a widowed mother in deep grief following her only son to the grave. He stood and saw that widow's tears, and giving way to the pity of His tender Heart, He raised His omnipotent hand and restored to her her only child. Wonder of wonders! Mysterious fact! Is it possible that those ears, which were never closed before to a cry of bitterness or of sorrow, will now be shut to Mary's sighs? Is it possible that that Sacred Heart which carried every child of Adam in its sweet love will not relieve the grief of His own Mother? Is it that He does not love His dearest Mother? Ah, no, a thousand times, no! He commanded children to honor their parents, and surely He would not violate the precept! What then? Generous love! Prodigy of generosity! His Mother's grief, instead of assuaging His afflictions, increases them, but He will be generous to the last. He will not allow one idea of self to enter His sacred mind. He will have no consolation. He bears His Mother's grief with His own.

And our blessed Lord, having at last ascended Mount Calvary, was stripped, so roughly that His wounds bled afresh. His arms were extended. He was cruelly nailed to the cross. The cross was raised, and sank violently into the place prepared for it. Jesus hung upon the cross between two thieves, to increase even in His death the indignities

heaped upon Him. But before He breathed His last, He gave us another proof of His love. Turning to His Mother, He consigned us to her as our Mother.

His lips moved in prayer. Even in His last words He will be generous. Hear Him. He prays for His executioners, "Father, forgive them!" Oh, Love never known before! Love never equalled! Love without interest, without selfishness! Benevolent, generous Lord! Generous in every action, generous in every thought, generous in every word, generous in birth, generous during life, generous, above all, in death!

His head was bowed, but in sorrow, as He looked into the future and saw how little many valued His Passion and death. His arms were extended, to embrace all who would return Him love for love. He gave His soul to His Eternal Father after three hours of agony, while all nature grew dark and trembled at the outrage offered its God. And after His death His side was opened with a lance by a cruel soldier; yes, opened but to admit us to His loving Heart.

And we are told by the Evangelist that the multitude returned, striking their breasts in repentance. May this be the fruit of our contemplation of the death of Our Lord! May we return to our homes truly repentant, with fixed determination to avoid sin, the cause of the sufferings of our divine Lord, and to return Him love for His generous love for us.

And let me entreat you not to forget in your prayers the Church, that Spouse which was wedded to Our Lord to-day. Ask His tender Heart to remember her sufferings, to look with mercy on His children, to give strength and relief to His Vicar on earth, who is so characteristically representing Him at this moment; pray for the conversion of sinners and infidels; pray for your friends; pray for your enemies.

May the death and Passion of Our Lord be to us fruitful unto life everlasting. Amen.

THE GREATEST GIFT: THE EUCHARIST

“Great are the works of the Lord . . . He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works . . . He hath given food to them that fear Him” (Ps. cx. 2, 4, 5).

THE Royal Prophet, David, participating in that vision by which the future becomes present to the divine mind, and contemplating with delight the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist, makes use of the words just quoted to express the result of his contemplation. He embodies, as it were, the significance of the entire works of God in this one sublime mystery, and proclaims it to be the aggregate and complement of all others. “He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works . . . He hath given food to them that fear Him.”

How does it happen that we who have the great and wonderful privilege of adoring and enjoying the sweet presence of God almost daily in the Holy Eucharist are so very indifferent to this favor? How is it that we assist at the Sacred Mysteries without any apparent improvement in our conversation, our actions, or our lives, while those holy men spoken of in the Old Law who were favored only by a fore-knowledge of the Sacred Mystery were wrapt in such ecstasies of admiration? How is it that we sometimes approach the Sacred Table without any special preparation, without, perhaps, one serious reflection on the great importance of the action we are about to perform, and the sanctity necessary to make it pleasing to God! Truly might the Prophet make use of those words; truly might he be wrapt in admiration of the power which this great miracle demanded of the Wisdom which invented it, and, above all, of the intense Love which suggested it. What mortal man could imagine greater love, or think for an instant of devising such extraordinary means, to enkindle, nourish, and

perfect our devotion to God? It was not enough that He instituted the other Sacraments through which He would infuse His grace into our souls; it was not sufficient that His life, which began in abjection, should be spent in poverty and sufferings, and terminated with the shedding of His blood; it was not sufficient for Him to leave us a Church, founded by Himself, and guided by the Spirit of God to the end of time—all this did not suffice to satisfy His intense love. There was still another gift to lavish upon us, the greatest of all; and this last He would bestow, and, as it were, exhaust His riches in the donation.

This last gift was Himself. That gift which he had hitherto promised, as is narrated in the sixth chapter of St. John, "I am the Bread of life. If any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living Bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world."

This gift which our blessed Lord promised He bestowed in the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist. In it He gives Himself to be the food of our spiritual life. Could we only realize, even for the shortest period of time, the mysterious magnificence and incomparable value of this gift, how suddenly the tenor of our lives would be altered. And, even now, were we filled with a more lively faith in this most holy mystery, how much more profound would be our reverence in the temple where the Holy of holies resides, and how much more increased would be our attention and devotion at the Holy Sacrifice, and our desire to partake of this heavenly Banquet!

In the following reflections, the consideration of this most Sacred Pledge of love may serve to render more thankful those who have already discharged the obligation of the Paschal season, and more earnest in their preparation to do so, those who have not as yet received their Easter Communion; and for this purpose we shall first try and see with what truth Our Lord, in the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist, has fulfilled the words of the Prophet. "He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works . . . He hath given food to them that fear Him."

The Blessed Eucharist is a Sacrament instituted by Christ, Our Lord, in which He Himself is really and substantially present under the appearance of bread and wine.

We distinguish two things in the Holy Eucharist, *viz.*, the Real Presence, or the living body of Christ, whole and entire, and the Sacred Species of the appearance and forms of bread and wine, which Species are sustained by the sacred body and blood of Our Lord. It is a Sacrament, because it is a sign made visible by the Sacred Species, and instituted by Our Lord at His Last Supper "to nourish our souls unto life everlasting." Some one may ask why Our Lord did not choose some other means of rendering Himself present among us sacramentally, besides giving us Himself under the humble veils of bread and wine? In the first place, it is not our province to divine the reasons of God, and hence the question should have been more properly asked of Our Lord Himself; but it is sufficient for us to know that He has done so, and to thank Him from our hearts for this greatest of favors. In the second place, we can answer this question by referring to the economy of God, and the usual means He has taken of infusing His grace into our souls.

By investigating we find that He never instituted a Sacrament without taking our nature into consideration. He knew man was created body and soul, and therefore the Sacraments He would have, in part, to correspond with the body or senses, and in part to be spiritual, or suitable to the requirements of the soul. Again, He always chose as matter for the Sacraments those things which would best express the interior signification of each.

Wherefore, as in Baptism He chose water, as in Penance He chose Confession, Contrition, and Satisfaction of the penitent, as the matter and substitute for matter, so also He chose bread and wine for the matter which His own words were to change into His most sacred body and blood. And still further, as the Eucharist was intended to be the bread of our spiritual life, He chose material bread as the most suitable to effect His intention; lastly, should Jesus Christ, Our Lord, appear before us in His supreme majesty, who among us would dare to approach Him? And hence, that we may not be deterred by His majesty, He draws us

to Him by His loving humiliation for our sake under the sacramental form which He has instituted for us.

The Holy Eucharist, besides being a Sacrament, is also a sacrifice. There never was a religion, whether true or false, that had not its sacrifice. Sacrifice to God is a natural expression of the homage of the heart of man to God. Hence it is that Our Lord, "who came not to destroy the law, but to perfect it," as He Himself has said, did not abolish sacrifice, but, rather, by instituting that Spotless Victim, perfected and realized all that the ancient sacrifices among the Jews and Gentiles symbolized. It is a sacrifice of propitiation for sin, both for the living and the dead, and a sacrifice of blessings and thanksgiving to Almighty God; it is a memorial to His wonderful works of power, wisdom, and goodness.

It is a memorial of His infinite power, for when Faith tells us that in the Holy Eucharist we possess the treasure of the real presence of Our Lord, our minds naturally appeal to His omnipotence as the final reason, and we are reminded of that power which called forth from nothing the universe and all that it contains; that power which cast the earth into unlimited space, and by a word produced that harmony in the universe which is a source of admiration to every contemplative mind, and still that same power which from a tiny seed sends forth the forest tree as well as the wayside flower. We are thus reminded of all those acts of omnipotence in the contemplation of the great Mystery of the Most Holy Eucharist, in which they are all, as it were, perfectly exhibited.

The Creation, though a work of infinite power, does not exceed this most sublime miracle, because in the Holy Eucharist we perceive, as it were, a new creation, a reproduction of Christ Himself, sacramentally present under the Sacred Species, while the concord of the atoms of universe in relation to its center, or the effect of the laws which govern it, is not greater nor more admirable in beauty of construction and uniformity of action, than the sweet harmony produced by and emanating from the presence of Our Lord in this Holy Sacrament of the Altar. It forms the center of the spiritual universe, whence spring those inspirations

which instruct and direct the Spouse of Christ in her work for the salvation of men. Around the Tabernacle converge the brightest hopes of the true Christian, and the holiest aspirations of the just man, as well as the sincere sorrow of the penitent soul.

Thus, beneath the humble veils of the Sacred Species is the immensity of the Deity contained. Truly, then, might St. Augustine be lost in astonishment in meditating on this sacred mystery, and truly might St. Thomas call it "the compendium, the abridgment, the perfection of all God's works." Truly might St. Bernard declare it "a wonderful work, worthy of earth and heaven, and surpassing the conception of the human intellect," greater in itself than the Tree of Life, for Jesus Christ is life itself; greater than the manna which the Jews fed upon in the desert, for "he who eateth this bread shall live forever;" greater than the bread which Elias received from the angel, for it leads us unto the Mount of God in the kingdom of the just. Thus, then, is the Holy Eucharist a memorial of the omnipotence of God.

It is also a memorial of the works of His infinite wisdom. What is wisdom? Wisdom is that attribute of the Almighty by which in His works He selects His ends and the means suitable to the fulfillment of these ends. Now, in instituting the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, this attribute is most prominently manifested. We are compelled to admire the evident exactitude observed by Him in completing the economy first established by Him for man's Redemption. In the Sacred Scriptures, for instance, we read that from the beginning of the world He manifested Himself to His creatures at intervals, in that manner most suited to them. He spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden; to Cain, when he slew his brother; to Abraham on different occasions; and again, to Jacob and to Moses.

As time went on, and when He had freed His people from bondage, we find that He was pleased to dwell with them, manifesting His immediate presence in the form of a cloud. It is evident that from the beginning He loved to dwell with men, and that "His delight was to be with the children of men." And now that the New Law, the law of

grace and of love, was to supersede the law of fear, could it be that He would withdraw His divine presence, when He determined to die for the salvation of mankind? The very idea is repugnant to His economy and His love. We were, at least, as dear to His heart as the Jews of old. He would, therefore, so far from withdrawing from us, become more easy of access. The Jews possessed His presence in a cloud, but we possess it, really and substantially, as it is in heaven. The Jews had a sacrifice to represent His all-atoning oblation of Himself, but we possess it in reality and effect. The Jews were governed by Him as their King; we are loved by Him as our Father; and hence, as the New Law was to perfect the old, so the reality of His presence with us was to be the antitype of that presence signified by the Cloud among the Jews.

But besides all this, the Blessed Eucharist is a memorial of the wonderful works of goodness, love, and mercy performed for us by the Son of God. Every act of His, from the crib at Bethlehem to the summit of Calvary, is reflected in it. It brings to our minds His Incarnation, for it is a continuation of that wonderful act of God. Did Our Lord not become incarnate He could not leave us Himself in the Holy Eucharist. It reminds us forcibly of that love which made Him choose a state of poverty and humiliation for our sakes. Here that state is specially manifested, for here he makes the humblest dwellings His home.

He asks no royal palace for His abode, no courtiers to surround His humble throne, but presents Himself everywhere in the humblest station and indiscriminately to the needy and the rich; to the saint and the sinner; to the lowly and the great.

In this manner also, the Holy Eucharist reminds us of His hidden life; for alone and in silence He is content if only some loving soul will visit Him at intervals, and show that there are at least some who do not forget His tender love. It reminds us of His sufferings; the pardon of the insults He received during His divine mission; His mildness toward those who treated Him with indifference; for here He is content to be insulted by incredulity, to be outraged by sacrilegious communion, and mocked by irrever-

ence, while in reality He is a source of joy and consolation to the just, of mercy to the penitent, and of strength to the weak.

It reminds us, in one word, of His whole life, birth, infancy, and manhood but, above all, it reminds us of His bitter Passion and death, for, according to St. Paul, "As often as you eat this bread or drink this chalice, you announce the death of the Lord." It is a memorial of His Passion and death, in its character of sacrifice; for being a relative sacrifice, having reference to the great Sacrifice of the Cross, it brings it before us as its principle. It reminds us of the eternal priesthood of Jesus; of His mediatorship, and therefore of His perfect atonement in that last act of His priestly office upon earth.

It reminds us of His Passion and death in its character as a Sacrament, because had He not suffered and died we would not have received it. It reminds us of His Passion and death in its very nature and institution, for what is it? What name does Jesus Christ give it at the moment of its institution? He calls it, "A new testament in His blood." Yes, it is the last will and testament of the most loving Father; the last pledge of His affection; the donation of His whole inheritance to His children before His memorable death. Who can think of those moments, those circumstances in which the Son of God signed and sealed His dying will, without being moved to this remembrance?

St. Paul, speaking of the eucharistic species, thus addresses the Corinthians, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said, Take ye and eat; this is My body." You have, most probably, sometimes read those words, but have you considered the meaning of the Apostle? "I have received," pointing out the greatness of the gift, and calling to mind the circumstances that it was instituted on the night Our Lord was betrayed. At the very time when men were plotting His death He was sending forth that last token of love which even angels had never received, which would complete and perfect His whole actions.

He entered the supper room, and addressed the Apostles

in those extraordinary words: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you." He longed to show them the depth of His love, but seemed too loving to give expression to it. Having taken bread, "He blessed it, and broke it, saying, 'Take ye and eat.' Likewise the chalice, saying, 'Drink ye all of this.'

"This is My last will, sealed in My blood. This is the new covenant which is to supersede that which the Eternal Father made to Moses; which is to be sealed, not in the blood of oxen, but in the blood of the God-Man." The Holy Eucharist is therefore a will and a testament.

You may have, at some time or other, assisted at the death-bed of a fond father. If so, you may form some idea of those moments when Our Lord gave us this pledge of love. You observed with what care he expressed his dying intentions; how every formality was to be observed; with what anxiety he called his children around him, and gave them his dying benediction; how he instructed them never to forget his advice; to be faithful children of their father; how he warned them to be dutiful in the position he had left them; and, as his children said farewell, he would make a last effort to give them the blessing of a father's love, the last treasure he possessed.

Now, precisely like this, but with greater perfection, was the last parting scene between our divine Lord and His disciples. He executed His last testament. He gave up His last possession, His divine self. He, too, said farewell to His children, but only as to His visible presence. In reality He would never leave them. He bade them remember Him after death, but remember Him by the oblation of Himself.

Truly, therefore, does the Church say, "*O Sacrum Convivium!*" This great Sacrament is therefore, in truth, a memorial of the love of God, and the complement of His works. "He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works . . . He hath given food to them that fear Him." But this remembrance is only for those who fear Him, only for those who serve Him and keep His Commandments.

This instruction cannot be concluded in a better manner than by using the language of the Church to those who have received this Most Holy Sacrament: "Praise thy Saviour, O

Sion; praise Him in hymns and canticles; for instead of that forbidden fruit of old, He has planted in the midst of us a tree of life which shall bear unto endless ages fruit the most delicious and preserving."

To those who have not as yet fulfilled their Paschal obligations, I will speak in the words of the Prophet: "All you who thirst, come to this fountain of waters, and you who have not silver, hasten, buy and eat. Come and buy without any exchange."

THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

“Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

IN THE epistle of this day, which is taken from the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, written by the Evangelist, St. Luke, St. Peter, anticipating a trial before the civil judges because he had wrought the cure of the lame man at the gate of the Temple, known by the name “Beautiful,” proclaims to the multitude who had followed him his authority to perform the miraculous deed. He immediately takes occasion both to reproach the incredulity and deicide of the Jews, as well as to point out to his hearers the true and only means whereby they could obtain salvation. “For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.” To the name of Jesus he attributes the salvation of man; in the name of Jesus he preached the Gospel; in the name of Jesus he baptized; in the name of Jesus he raised the dead to life; in that name, too, and by it alone, can we expect to be saved.

The word “name” can be used in various senses. It denotes the title by which anything or any person is distinguished or identified, and in this sense have we said the name of Our Lord is a name of the highest dignity. It also signifies the power and authority of him whose name it is; and it is, moreover, used not so much for a distinctive mark, as for the person of him to whom it belongs.

In the Old Testament, whenever the Almighty intended to send new and special proofs of His providence and love for His people, He set apart special agents by whom and through whom He would communicate them. To these divinely commissioned legates He invariably confined to Him-

self the authority of giving names; names whose signification would express the object of their mission, and the duties they were raised up to discharge. Thus we find that the Prophet Samuel received his mission through an angel; thus were Jeremias, Isaias, Eliseus and Daniel, all named, either immediately or mediately by a message from heaven; thus did Abraham and Josue receive their titles; thus was St. John the Baptist named that he might remember his duty, "To go before the face of the Lord, and make straight His paths."

Pursuant to this economy, the Almighty, prior to the conception of the Son of God by the Most Holy Virgin, sent His chief angel to bear the sacred intelligence, and charge her to call the Holy One born of her by the name Jesus; and that there might be no obscurity to cloud the object of this mission, he gave also the reason for, and signification of, the sacred name. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." How great, then, must be that name, greater than every other name by so much as the Son of God is prominent above every creature. Greater than that of Abraham, who, though the father of many nations, was only an inadequate type of Him, "whose children were to be multiplied as the stars, and to inhabit from the river to the ends of the earth." Greater than that of Elias and Isaias, for though their privilege was to participate with God in a vision of the future emanating from the divine mind, yet the vision of Jesus was that of God Himself. Greater than that of Samuel, for though he was anointed Prophet of the Most High, his office was to terminate with his life, while Jesus was to be the Anointed of the Lord forever. Greater than that of the Baptist, who was more than a prophet; because, though he was to herald the advent of the Messiah, and the reign of peace among men, yet Jesus was that Messiah "who brought justice and abundance of peace until the moon shall be taken away." Greater than Mary, for though she was destined to be the star of Redemption's day, her brightness was absorbed in the brilliancy of the "Sun of justice."

No marvel, therefore, that the Apostle should say the Eternal Father gave Him a name which is above every

name. His office as Redeemer demanded it; for as He alone could satisfy, unto rigor, the justice of His Father, so He alone could bear the incommunicable name of Jesus. His office as priest demanded it, for, being from His two-fold nature a Man-God, Priest, and Mediator, it was meet that His name should be such as to distinguish Him from the children of men, as the Apostle says, "a High Priest, holy, just, and separated from sinners," and designates Him as the origin and source of His perpetual Priesthood on earth.

Hence the name of Jesus is a name of the most exalted dignity and excellency. It is a name of sovereign sanctity and fear, according to the Royal Prophet: "holy and terrible is His name." It is a name of extreme tenderness, affection, and consolation, and therefore it is said to be as "oil poured out," a healing balsam for the soul wounded by sin, and afflicted by the trials and sufferings of life. A name full of sweetness to the just, and of confidence to the penitent soul.

The name of Jesus is, besides, a name of power and authority, for it is the name of the Son of God, by whom all things were created. "It is not the mere shadow of a great name," as St. Bernard observes, "but a name of truth and greatness, given to Him from eternity, and born with Him, for by His very nature He was a Saviour." "It was given Him by the archangel before He was conceived in the womb," as the Evangelist so manifestly expresses when he says, "the Word was made flesh," words also implied by the Prophet Isaias, whose special duty it was to proclaim the prerogatives of the Messiah, as when he says, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light . . . to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen . . . They shall rejoice before Thee, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice . . . when they divide the spoils . . . For a Child is born unto us, and a Son is given to us, and the government is upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God, the Mighty, the Father of the world to come—the Prince of peace" (Isaias ix. 2, 3, 6).

All these names by which the holy prophet foretold that the Messiah would be known, are included, either explicitly

or implicitly, in the adorable name of Jesus. He is the Emmanuel, or "God with us," because by becoming Saviour, He destroyed the barrier which sin raised between God and man; and by the graces which He purchased and gives us through His Sacraments, brings us nearer to God. His name is wonderful on account of His incomprehensible divinity, eternity, and supreme majesty.

He is wonderful in His conception and truth; wonderful in His austere life, in His sublime doctrine, in His ignominious Passion and death, and His glorious Resurrection. "Thou wilt wonder," says St. Cyprian, "when thou shalt understand this most profound mystery. That He who is despised is made wonderful, and He who neither studied letters, nor was conversant with laws, is capable of giving counsel in divine and human things. How wonderful is Thy name, O Lord!"

The holy name of Jesus is wonderful, indeed, for what works can be conceived more wonderful than those which that name has wrought and is perfecting in the hearts of men! Jesus changes the heart of the sinner, and makes him like to serve God. He makes him hate what he loved, and love what he previously hated. He makes him grieve for those things in which he previously rejoiced, and embrace those good works which he had so studiously avoided. The name of Jesus is wonderful in the grace which it gives those who cherish it. Look at those countless thousands who left the world, and received, in exchange, a life of penance, mortification, torments or martyrdom: what was it that enabled these to persevere and undergo such persecutions? The records and history of those myriads of martyrs, whose blood has reddened almost every page of the Church's annals will tell you, "It was the most holy name of Jesus."

In the narrative of St. Stephen's death, we read in the sacred text that he called on the name of Jesus, by which he received strength, not only to suffer, but to pray for his persecutors, and we are told in the Acts of the Apostles that, "Peter and John went forth from the civil court rejoicing, because they were found worthy to suffer contumely for the name of Jesus." What was it that strengthened those numberless victims of Roman barbarity, when, thrown into

the amphitheater, they were made the prey of the lion and tiger to amuse the savage ferocity of a demoralized people? It was the name of Jesus. What gave to the weak and tender virgin, as she stood before the Roman Governor or Prefect, the dauntless courage to proclaim her faith, and unhesitatingly accept both torture and death rather than abandon it, and forfeit her virtue? Were you then living and present at the scene, you might have heard the answer on her lips: "the most holy name of Jesus."

What strengthened those numberless youths to despise the brightest prospects, and embrace a faith which they saw practiced in obscurity, rewarded by persecution, and entailing death? Love for the name of Jesus! What induced kings and queens to place their crowns at the foot of the altar, and warriors to sheathe their swords and lay them down beneath the shadow of the sanctuary? Why, today, as in days of old, do young men of fortune and talent, and maidens rich in every accomplishment which nature and art can bestow, retire from the pleasures of the world to the narrow limits of the cloister, and there, forgotten and unknown to the outer world, lead lives which truly manifest the sanctity of the Church of God, and become models of virtue forever? All for love of the name of Jesus! What fortified the apostles in their labors, when, humanly speaking, paganism would defy them? What that long line of Confessors, Priests and Bishops, who have handed down to us our Faith, inviolate and intact? The most adorable name of Jesus! What gives vitality and energy to the poor, forlorn missionary, as he traverses the prairie, the desert, or the ocean? What comforts him at night, as he takes his rest beneath a tree, with no human eye to watch over him? What fortifies him in the morning and at noon, to begin and continue that labor of love, with no earthly recompense to himself? Nothing else than the sweet name of Jesus! In that is his hope, his strength, his consolation, and to promote its honor he devotes his whole life. Finally, let me ask, what inspires the weak and delicate female with martyr's courage to brave the terrors of war upon the battlefield, the death-striking scourge of contagion in the pest-house, and to watch, like an angel of peace, and with more than a

mother's love, beside the afflicted, the wounded, or the dying, reckless of every worldly danger or reward? The only answer is the name of Jesus, which is on her lips, and which she teaches and urges her dying patient to breathe with his last breath. How powerful, then, is the name of Our Lord! Truly, it is worthy of praise forever.

But the name of Jesus is a name of Wisdom, for according to the Prophet Isaias, He was to be called Counsellor; He was to be the Angel of Great Counsel. It is a name of wisdom, for by becoming Our Saviour and taking the name, Jesus, He gave us the object and example of the most heroic virtues. He gave us the means of exercising an heroic faith. For who, except by the most profound faith, could believe that God appeared on earth as a poor, helpless infant? He gave us reason for hope, for who would not hope for salvation when God Himself became our ransom? A reason for love, for who would not love God supremely when He so loved us as to become like unto us? He gave us a reason for love of justice, for who would not love justice when he sees God crucified, that the injury done by sin may be canceled, even unto the rigors of justice? Of patience, for He was the meekest of men, who would not break even the bruised reed. Of obedience, for He became obedient even unto death. Of humility, for He annihilated Himself, as it were, by becoming man, and therefore He received the exalted name of Jesus; that before Him every knee should bow, in heaven, on earth; and in hell!

To whom, then, before this Supreme Angel of Counsel should you have recourse in all your necessities? If you should ever be tempted to hesitate between duty and prevarication, invoke with great confidence the Angel of Great Counsel. If you should be doubtful of your true state of life; depressed in spirits; troubled in temptation; placed in danger, in trial or persecution, implore the assistance of the Angel of Great Counsel. Call on the powerful name of Jesus, and like the light which guided the Israelites through the desert, He will direct you and point out to you the true path He followed. "When we know not what to do, one thing alone have we left us, to direct our eyes to Thee."

The name of Jesus also proclaims Him to be God, because

no other beside Him could adequately expiate the injury done to God. He is also the Father of a future world, because by becoming Saviour and Redeemer, He became the Regenerator of the human race, and their leader to that new kingdom without end, which He purchased for them with His blood.

He is, lastly, the Prince of peace. By being Saviour and Jesus, He bestowed that peace which was hitherto disturbed by the reign of sin. He satisfied the justice of God, and brought peace to the heart of man, "abundance of peace until the moon shall be taken away;" "peace which," in His own divine words, "the world cannot give," the peace of God.

If we should have need to add any more to those proofs of the power of the holy name, we have only to recollect the promise of the Father Himself, that "Whatsoever we ask the Father in His name, He will give it to us," understanding always that we ask aright, and again, "If two or three be gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

Seeing, therefore, the signification, the dignity, the sanctity, the power and efficacy of the holy name of Jesus, what reverence is there due to this holiest of names! What sorrow and indignation should fill our minds whenever we are obliged to hear it outraged by language from the mouth of the blasphemous!

To any person reading the psalms of the Royal Prophet, that man "according to God's own heart," it seems as though his all-absorbing thought is to bless the name of God. In the midst even of his sublime prophecy, he seems to interrupt himself, and burst forth into canticles of praise to the name of the Lord. At one time he calls on children; at another, on the aged; and again, as if not satisfied, he invites the whole human race to unite in blessing the holy name. And still he is not content: his ardent zeal would carry him so far as that he would fain give speech to heaven and earth, to angels and men, to every beast and bird and living creature, to every tree and flower and mountain and valley, to every ocean, river and stream, to sun and moon, to every star in the firmament; in a word, to every object in creation,

that all may join in one exultant song of praise to the name of the Most High.

Now he begins a psalm by proclaiming the majesty of that name, now he recounts the benefits of God to man, how He raised him from dust, and made him little less than the angels, and then, meditating on the base ingratitude of man, he turns away, as if indignant, and lost, as it were, in the contemplation of the mercies of God, he concludes as he began, "O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name throughout the whole earth!"

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

AMONG the various feelings proper to the human mind, there is none purer nor more holy than that of mutual affection between parent and child. Instinctive in its principle, and dictated by reason, it received the written sanction of positive law from God Himself.

Instinctive, I say, in its principle, because it arises from a source purely natural, and is guided even by instinct itself. Dictated by reason, because reason, elevating it to the standard of which a rational being alone is capable, claims it as a duty, that we honor with respect and love those to whom, after God, we owe our existence in this life.

It received the written sanction of God Himself, for when Jehovah, amid thunder and lightning, descended on Mount Sinai to give the written law to the children of Israel, in His own name did He write that precept which says, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

And truly, even among people not blessed with the light of Faith, it is rare to find parents and children whose sympathies are not mutual, whose joys are not transferred from one to the other and become not identical with the existence of both.

This, I say, is a true expression of nature; this is an act of perfect humanity in accordance with the law of God, a duty the more strictly observed, according as he who performs it approaches the more nearly the Source of all perfection, which is God Himself.

Hence it is that the Church of God, endowed with His wisdom, and overshadowed by His Spirit, has ever made it one of her most important duties to promote and cherish among her children devotion to the Mother of her Spouse; knowing that in doing so she only perpetuates that respect and honor and love which He gave to her on earth, which

He gives her at His right hand in heaven, and which redound to His own greater glory, because He is her divine Son.

Hence it is that the same holy Church, while commemorating annually the principal mysteries of our Redemption, forgets not to intersperse among them some which have special reference to the Mother of God, that, as she was selected to co-operate in the great work of the Redemption, she might also participate in that glory which is rendered her divine Son by His Spouse on earth.

In conformity with the spirit of the Church, there surely could be no subject more suitable, and, certainly, none more characteristic of a good Christian, than devotion to the Mother of God.

What, then, is devotion? Devotion, in as far as it has relation to the present subject, signifies, "A habit of religion, by virtue of which we elicit acts of homage and love to God and His saints, thank them for their favors, and ask their assistance."

This general definition comprises two distinct and different species of devotion: the first is that which consists in the acts of supreme homage which we owe to God alone; in which we recognize Him as our Creator and our God, and as such, pay Him that supreme and divine honor which can only be given Him, in which we thank Him for His mercies, and directly petition for His grace. To offer this supreme homage to any other being, would be an act of idolatry. But besides this, there is a second species of devotion, by which, though we by no means pay divine honor, yet we honor the saints and angels as the friends of God. We return them thanks for the favors which He confers on us through them, and we ask them to intercede with Him for us.

You see, therefore, that this devotion includes three things: 1st, the honor which the saints deserve on account of their dignity as the immediate friends of God; 2d, the gratitude and love which merit for us the favors we receive through them; and, 3d and lastly, a petition to assist us by their prayers; and as the claim to honor and gratitude increases, and as their intercession becomes more powerful, so also, in proportion, should our devotion, in consequence, become the more intense.

This seems a self-evident conclusion; and it is for these reasons that devotion to our blessed Lady should be special and above that to all the servants of God, whether saints or angels.

We owe greater honor to our blessed Lady than to all the other servants of God, on account of her exalted, pre-eminent dignity. The respect and honor paid to every person should be in proportion to the position and true merit which that person possesses. "Honor to whom honor is due," says the Apostle St. Paul. And as the position and relation of the person approach more nearly the plenitude of dignity and power, by so much is increased the claim to reverence. This is a principle of reason, even in its crudest form. We find it demonstrated by the savage tribes, who honor and obey the chiefs whom they themselves elect. It is proven and confirmed by the usages of society, where civilization refines the human mind, for, in matters of civil import, we find that the honor which a nation pays to one of its Senators is secondary to that which is given to a Prince, while both are inferior to that which a Sovereign receives.

It is exemplified and commanded in Holy Scripture in various places. Among other examples, we read in Genesis that after the Patriarch Joseph went down into Egypt, he was raised by the Egyptian king, Pharaoh, to the position of vice-gerent of the nation; he was clothed in royal garments, and wore on his finger the king's ring, a symbol of his high office, and all the Egyptians bowed down before his chariot, and honored him next to the king, before all others in the kingdom. And why did they so honor him? Why? Not, truly, because he was the son of Jacob, for as such he was sold as a slave, but because he represented the king, and because he was next in dignity to him.

Again, we are told in the Book of Esther that Mardochai, the poor, mendicant Hebrew, who daily sat at the gate of the palace of King Assuerus, because he was raised by the king to the first place in the kingdom, afterwards passed through the streets of the chief city amid the acclamations of the people. And this, why? The immediate response is, because he was exalted in dignity, therefore he received corresponding honor. Again, how great was the honor and

respect paid to the Patriarchs, because of their position! to the Prophets, because of the sublime office which they held! to the priests of the Old Law, because of the distinction of their state!

Almighty God commanded Moses that the tribe of Levi should not be numbered with the rest of the people, but that they should be reckoned by themselves. How great was the honor paid to Moses and Josue because they were leaders of the people!

In the New Testament, also, we have this duty exemplified in the deference our blessed Lord and the Apostles paid to earthly rulers; and St. Paul, in his Epistles, specially commands that this distinction be made.

When this is so, when respect and honor should be in proportion to the dignity of the person honored, what shall we say, or how shall we speak of that honor and respect due to the Mother of God! For what shall we say of her dignity, whose very blood flowed in the veins of the God-Man? What shall we say of her, who pressed Him to her bosom in His infancy, and who cared for Him in His boyhood and His youth, as her own child? Of her, to whom the Son of God, the Splendor of the Father's glory and the Figure of His substance, was subject, as His Mother?

Oh, what tongue can adequately tell the dignity of Mary! In the Gospel of St. Luke we read that, when the Archangel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin that she was to be the Mother of God, he addressed her in language which in those days was only applied to royalty. And the angel, addressing her, said, "Hail! full of grace!" As though he said, "O Holy Virgin, I bow down before thy royal presence!" Mary, therefore, was greater in dignity than the angels and archangels, for Gabriel saluted her as his queen. Greater than the Patriarchs, for to them were never spoken words of such mysterious signification. Greater than the kings of Israel and Juda, for although they governed the people of God, to her was confided the care of God the Son made man. Greater than the Prophets, for though their lips were purified by angels to predict the coming of the Messias, she was overshadowed by the Spirit of God. Greater than St. John the Baptist, for though he was sanctified in his

mother's womb, she was never for an instant subject to the stain of original sin. Greater than the Apostles, for though they were made vessels of election to bear the name of Christ throughout the earth, she was the chosen Mother of the Immaculate Lamb of God. Greater than the martyrs and virgins, for her life was a perpetual martyrdom, and her maternity a miraculous virginity.

Yes, by comparison with all other creatures, we arrive at some knowledge of Mary's pre-eminence, yet how inadequate is this knowledge! For lost in the contemplation of her singular prerogative as Mother of God, we are unable to comprehend her exalted dignity. To do this, it would be, first, necessary to comprehend the unspeakable dignity of her divine Son.

How truly, then, may we say with the Prophet, "He that is mighty has done great things for her, and holy is His name; therefore, from henceforth all generations shall call her blessed." "Exult and rejoice, O Daughter of Sion, because the Lord is great in thy midst."

And here I might speak of the claim which her sanctity has on our honor and respect. But who can represent to himself the inner sanctuary of that sinless soul, and contemplate its brightness, without most profound awe? How, then, shall we comprehend the sanctity of Mary? Mary, the most perfect creature that ever came forth from the hand of God! Mary, the spotless Virgin, that knew no sin, not even the sin of Adam! Mary, the Morning Star of Redemption's day, that ushered in the Sun of justice! Mary, the bright light, that, dispelling the darkness of sin, guided the wayward children of Eve to the feet of a forgiving Saviour!

How can we comprehend that sanctity before which even an archangel became prostrate? Those virtues that adorned her soul, and made it the habitation of the Blessed Trinity? That humility that exalted her above every creature? That lively faith that brought her to the Temple in her infant years? That firm hope that stimulated every action? That burning love, which drew down God Himself from His throne of glory? That modesty and prudence that concealed the singular favors of the Most High from the eyes of men? That sublime and stainless purity, so dear to her heart, and

for which she would forego even her privilege as Mother of God? That perfect resignation to the will of God? That great patience with which she bore her untold sufferings? That unswerving fortitude and fidelity and supreme confidence in God, which sustained her soul in an ocean of bitterness and of sorrow?

Oh, Mary, we pay thee homage; we honor and we revere thy name next to that of thy divine Son, because of thy exalted dignity! We bow down before thee, and acknowledge thy transcendent sanctity. We salute thee, Queen of angels and of men! We hail thee, "full of grace!" "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honor of our people!" "Many daughters have gathered together riches, but thou hast surpassed them all." "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy sacred womb."

Mary, therefore, has a special claim before all the other saints to our honor and reverence. But besides this, she has a claim on our gratitude. It is related in the Book of Judith that when the Assyrian General, Holofernes, had laid siege to Bethulia, a city of the Jewish people, the inhabitants felt themselves so oppressed that they were about yielding themselves up to the enemy as captives. There was among them, however, a pious woman, who spent her days in seclusion and prayer to God. She reproached them with their conduct, and exhorted them to confidence. After having spent some days in solemn prayer and mortification, this heroic woman, accompanied by one servant, went forth herself to the enemy's camp, obtained admission to the general's room, beheaded him with her own hand, and, having concealed the head beneath her mantle, brought it back, as a trophy of victory, to her people. Their chief being slain, the enemy became an easy prey.

It is further related that when Judith returned, and exhibited the severed head to the Jewish people, they gathered around her, carried her in procession, proclaimed her the glory and joy of their nation, and made a promise that her name should go down to posterity in benediction, because she had been the means of freeing them from the Gentile yoke.

Now in Judith the Church recognizes a symbol of our

blessed Lady. We should have been captives of Satan had not Mary interfered, and by her immaculate purity found favor with God, crushed the serpent's head, and scattered his forces by her virtues. We were freed, therefore, from the slavery of sin and Satan through this second and more glorious Judith. Through her we have received all those privileges which her divine Son purchased for us, and which render us coheirs with Himself. Those benefits are as far above the benefits which Judith conferred on the Israelites as the soul exceeds the body in nature and in dignity. How much reason, therefore, have we to return thanks to this glorious Queen! How much more reason to say, "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel!" How much more reason to transmit her name to posterity in benediction! O glorious Queen of all the heavenly citizens, we thank thee as the instrument through whom we have received the blessing of Redemption by thy divine Son!

Mary, therefore, has the most prominent claim on our gratitude. Her intercession is, likewise, the most powerful with God.

That the saints and angels can assist us by their prayers is a dogma of our holy Faith, taught us from our infancy. And, indeed, in the Old Testament, we find that the ancient people of God prayed for one another. St. Paul expressly recommended himself to the prayers of the people of his time. Hence if the prayers of our friends avail us on earth, how much more will they avail us when those friends are around the throne of God, confirmed in glory.

It is related in the Book of Tobias that the Angel Raphael appeared to that holy Patriarch in human shape, and told him that when he had prayed, after having fasted and given alms and buried the dead, the angel presented his petitions before the throne of the Most High. Hence we see that the angels and saints intercede for us in heaven.

But Mary's intercession is most powerful of all. We have said that Mary is next to God in dignity, above every other of His creatures in sanctity, hence she is most acceptable in His divine sight. This should be sufficient to demonstrate that her intercession with Him is the most powerful of all, and therefore we should frequently ask her for it. We are

told by the Evangelist that, at the marriage of Cana, in Galilee, where Jesus and Mary blessed the ceremony with their presence, the supply of wine at the nuptial feast gave out; our blessed Lord did not concern Himself, at first, but His holy Mother, seeing the trouble of her hosts, and knowing that she was dear to the heart of her divine Son, turned to Him, and asked Him, by His divine power, to lend His aid. What was His answer? "My hour is not yet come," to work miracles. As though He should say, Mother, why do you ask this favor? For although the hour has not yet come to manifest My divine power, yet I cannot refuse you. Hence He changed water into wine for the guests.

We read in the Book of Esther that King Assuerus, through the intercession of Queen Esther, not only annulled the edict of death which he had promulgated against the Jewish people, but made them his first subjects, and added that had Esther asked the third part of his kingdom he would not have refused it, because she had found favor in his sight.

Esther is here a symbol of our blessed Lady, who asks from the King of kings and the God of mercy the freedom of her clients from the worst of deaths, that of the soul. She is pre-eminent in the divine sight, before all the other saints in dignity, in sanctity, and in merit. He who regards all according to their deserts cannot refuse Mary anything, more especially because she is His Mother. How many victories over heresy and persecution has not the Church recorded in her annals through Mary's intercession! How many evils have been averted, and how many benefits obtained through it! "Who has ever applied to Mary for succor and has not received it?" She was given to us as a Mother by Jesus Christ. Oh, Mary, Tower of David, Refuge of sinners, Comfortress of the afflicted, obtain for us an increase of love and devotion to thee!

Mary, therefore, exalted next to God Himself in dignity, pre-eminent above every creature in sanctity, claims special honor and respect and homage, next to the Creator. Mary, our greatest benefactor after God, next to Him claims our love and gratitude. Mary, most powerful with God, will change His wrath to love toward the sinner who asks her

intercession, and though his crimes were as scarlet, she will obtain for him grace to repent.

O, then let us ever cherish devotion to Mary. Let us take example by men of worldly wisdom, who, when they have to ask a favor of some dignitary, endeavor to secure the influence of his best friend. We have to ask many favors of Almighty God. Let us secure the influence of Mary, His dearest Mother and best friend. Are you troubled with the sins of your life? Call on the "Refuge of sinners," and she will obtain your pardon. Are you afflicted with trials and temptations? Invoke the "Help of Christians," and she will succor you. Is there any time when friends desert you, when you feel abandoned by all, desolate, and, as it were, alone in the world? Ah, then, have recourse to the "Comfortress of the afflicted" and she who was schooled in sorrow, and suffered without human consolation, will never desert you in the hour of trial. She will raise your heart above the fading goods of this earth, and place its affections in that kingdom beyond the grave, which has no end, and where all is joy amid the true friends of God.

Pray to her, then, in every necessity and danger. Pray to her for your friends; pray to her for your enemies. Pray to her in the morning, pray to her at noon, pray to her in the evening. Pray to her, in a word, during life, but, above all, at the hour of death. Let that sweet prayer of the Church be frequently on your lips "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death."

"May her name, next to that of Jesus, be blessed, and her praises chanted by the lips of babes, from generation to generation." Amen.

THE SANCTITY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

THIS is one of the most important subjects that could by any possibility occupy the thoughts of a Christian people, namely, the sanctity of marriage. And when I speak of marriage, of course I do not mean pagan or heathen marriage, nor do I mean that which is regarded as such by those outside the Church, and which is really and absolutely nothing more nor less than a simple business contract, by which two parties agree to discharge the offices of husband and wife toward each other during their pleasure, or as long as it will suit their own personal interest. When I say marriage, I mean marriage as it is understood in a Christian and in a Catholic sense.

When, in the sixteenth century, those who were so falsely called Reformers did away, for themselves and their followers, with the Sacraments entirely, or almost entirely, and introduced into the domain of supernatural and revealed religion the right of every individual to form his own judgment as to what he should really believe, they, of course, at that moment laid the foundation of every error and false doctrine that can pass through the human brain, no matter how fickle. From that moment men were free to pass judgment on everything, no matter how sacred, whether God was its Author or not.

To give some appearance of consistency to their false doctrines, the Reformers declared that there were only two Sacraments: what they understood as Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Penance, Holy Orders, Extreme Unction, Confirmation, Matrimony, were all removed by these corrupt men from the number of lifegiving sources of divine grace.

But, though its sacred and supernatural character was rudely torn away, from the very nature of the case, the contract of matrimony was supposed to exist in its natural form

and condition, with this qualification, that, whereas God had originally instituted matrimony even in its natural state, as between one man and one woman, Luther and his companions allowed some men a plurality of wives.

Such was the loose and scandalous teaching of those men, who in this as in other respects were among the greatest enemies of Christian society, and the destroyers of Christian morality. To be sure, the teaching of the Church had been so deeply established, and had impressed itself with so much force and weight on the conscience and mind of the Christian world, that the loose theories on this subject did not take root for a long time. But the natural result and the necessary consequence of the false doctrine of the reformed religion were sure to come. For that reason we find the world over-spread and filled to-day with these false theories and doctrines, and with vices which shock the Christian sense of the community.

Now the social and political body, in other words, Society, is made up of all elements; and, in addition to the fact that the fallen nature of man has a tendency toward the mere animal life, there is the awful fact that a great many, having followed out the principle of private judgment to its conclusion, have cast off all authority, and all religion, and therefore have settled down to live merely natural lives; that is to say, they live for this world, and deny themselves none of the gratifications of sense. The consequence of all this is that the marriage contract is nothing more among them than mere barter and sale, that the union of man and woman is like the union of the animals, and endures only to suit convenience and pleasure. What difference is there to-day between the state of woman and the relations of woman and man in many cases, and, in fact, universally, in theory, outside the Church, and their state and relations in pagan countries?

In pagan countries, among the heathen people, like the Persians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Coreans and the Oriental races generally, men have a number of wives, "as many as they can support."

Yet what better is it where man, under the guise of being married to one woman, in reality is the profligate companion

and adulterous lord of a number of women? The same may be said with truth of woman; she, too, while apparently the faithful companion of one man who is called her husband is perhaps the concubine of many.

To this has the state of society come. Adultery is regarded outside the Church with almost shameless indifference, and the virgin purity of woman, which among Christians has always been her most precious jewel, no longer holds that coveted place among the virtues of the maiden of modern times.

Now, for fifteen hundred years and more the Christian world had been led and taught to believe, on the authority of God and His unerring Spouse, the Church, that marriage was instituted by God as between one man and one woman; and that even though different marriages had been tolerated sometimes among the Jews, it was never known or heard of since the days of Christ the Redeemer, that a man once lawfully joined in the sacramental bonds of wedlock was ever allowed to marry a second woman while the first wife lived, or a woman a second husband during the lifetime of the first.

That was rendered impossible by Jesus Christ. It is so to-day. Whoever asserts the contrary is cursed with solemn anathema by the Bride of Christ.

Therefore, when suddenly the royal and impious example of Henry VIII. of England was given to the world, the people were not ready for its bad impression. Of all the doctrines wherewith the Son of God enlightened men's minds and purified their intelligence, perhaps this divine teaching on the two states of virginity and matrimony, and their relations, had the most ennobling effect on and the most glorious results for the human race.

Before the doctrines of Christianity were taught, men were taught to adore the vices. With Christianity they realized that the more they despised the animal instincts and the baser passions, the keener and the brighter their spiritual and their mental vision became. Personal and conjugal chastity became a most precious and a most coveted virtue. To add to its luster the Christian Church and the Christian teaching put before men for their models, Jesus Christ, the

God-Man, who was conceived in the womb, and born, as the sacred writers express it, "*Sine complexu carnali*," that is to say, without the intervention of a carnal embrace, and by the divine power of the Most High.

He, when He walked among men and gave to them from His divine and priestly lips the saving doctrines of the new law and the Gospel, was known to love the state of virginity with so much tenderness that no one ever in His life even entertained a thought to the contrary. And when His enemies accused Him of every crime they could think of, of theft, and blasphemy, and sedition, His virginal character shone with the luminous luster of the noonday sun.

He was the first, and the great model, for the Christian. Then, in the second place, there was Mary, His Virgin Mother, who united in her own person the singular and unheard-of attributes of virgin and mother at the same time. She was held before the eyes of the Christian woman for fifteen hundred years before the Reformers came, as the model of every virtue, and specially of chastity.

Men raised their eyes, fixing their gaze on this singular gift to man, and began to ask themselves, Is this, indeed, one of us? Is this a woman? Is this woman the Mother of our God? And when they realized her dignity, her love of virtue, her mysterious holiness, they cried aloud to her, praising her:

Thou art the glory of Jerusalem,
Thou art the joy of Israel!

Sculptors and painters, who had been accustomed to carve and paint gross and material beauty, turned their exalted genius to depict the superhuman and spiritual beauty of Jesus Christ and of His Mother. Poets, who sang of carnal gods and goddesses, and of mere human passions, were immediately drawn, and, as it were irresistibly, to sing the holiness, the exalted station, the honor of Mary. They said:

Ave Domina Angelorum;
Ave Maris Stella;
Casta Virgo nesciens virum;
O Gloriosa Virginum.

In a word, they exhausted the powers of language and utterance to exalt Mary in the eyes of man and woman; and justly so. She was the Mother of God, inferior only to Himself.

And now we ask ourselves, What shall save the fabric of Christian civilization, which Christendom for twenty centuries has been building with so much labor, from being paganized and utterly ruined in its social and domestic character? Only the Catholic doctrine of Christian Marriage.

We cannot hide from our sight the fact that a few among our own people, who should know better, are influenced to some degree by the doctrines and practices of those around them. Let us never lose sight of the cardinal fact and principle that the teaching of Christianity and the Christian Church itself were introduced by God as the means whereby mankind may oppose its corrupt inclinations, and overcome the passions which tend to degrade.

If we follow that teaching; if we dwell faithful children close to the bosom of that Mother of the faithful; if we take refuge within that ark in company with those who desire to love and serve God faithfully, we shall be saved, no matter how great the deluge, how high the water, or how long the period of time it may last in the Providence of God, Our Father and Redeemer. If we neglect to take shelter within that ark, we shall surely be lost in the seething waters of infidelity, of corruption, and final destruction.

And do Thou, Eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Creator and Redeemer of man, and of social order and the moral law; Thou who canst, and dost, bring order out of chaos; good out of evil, and peace out of confusion; Thou, O holy Word of God, made flesh to sanctify mankind; Thou, O Holy Ghost, the source and fountain of light and grace; vouchsafe to look down with mercy and compassion on miserable man, banish the darkness of sin and ignorance, and send forth, once more, the light of Thy divine Truth, and aid mankind to embrace it with all their hearts.

And thou, O Virgin Mother, "*Casta Virgo nesciens virum,*" remember the sorrows which our Redemption caused, and pray for us, that the price shall not have been paid in vain. Amen.

LAWS GOVERNING THE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE —HOW MARRIAGE SHOULD BE CELEBRATED

WHO can marry? What are the laws which govern the sacramental contract of marriage; what are the impediments which annul and forbid it? By Catholics these laws and impediments must be given grave consideration before they can think of receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony.

One of the impediments most likely to occur is that of "Disparitas Cultus," or difference in religion. The Church has constituted difference in religion an *annulling* impediment to marriage, when that difference means that the non-Catholic party has not received the Sacrament of Baptism. In the case of a person who, though belonging to some one of the Protestant sects, yet has been baptized, she makes difference of religion a barrier to marriage, forbidding it under pain of grievous sin.

Why does the Church do this? This question may be answered by almost any person who has known instances of such marriages. I may say, without any danger of error or misstatement, that such marriages, even when the sanction of the Church has been reluctantly obtained, are almost invariably unhappy, and productive of lifelong bitterness and misery. I say reluctantly obtained, for she never sanctions such unions except with deep and heartfelt regret, and only to avoid a greater evil or prevent it.

The Church has made this an impediment because of the danger to Faith which would arise from such marriages, if promiscuously allowed. Faith is a divine virtue, the free gift of God to us, without any merit on our part. It is the foundation of every supernatural virtue in the heart of man, and of the entire structure of the supernatural life in his soul. So necessary is it that without it it is impossible to please God. So necessary is it that we must rather forfeit

our lives than deny or abandon our Faith. Therefore, we cannot be too careful in guarding its existence and life in our souls, because of its necessity.

Now, though Faith is so extremely necessary, it is at the same time a virtue which dies in the heart without constant care. We must remove dangers to it, and we must nourish it with the oil of charity and good works and practices of religion. One of the greatest dangers to Faith is intimate association with those who have it not, or who have a kind of faith in virtue of which they believe only whatever they please.

This danger grows and becomes very great as the circumstances change. The closer the intimacy, the stronger the attachment, or friendship, or love, if you will, the greater the danger to Faith. Friendship, love, produces a likeness of tastes and likeness of will and desire. Affection for the person runs over even to a love of what he or she loves, and every barrier which stands in the way of producing that result will finally disappear; unless, indeed, there is constant resistance in the heart, which, in the generality of cases, is not likely to occur.

Another danger to Faith, and, indeed, a very great one, is if, in the circumstances of which we speak, the Catholic party is not well instructed in the Faith, or is not assiduous in putting its teachings into practice. This danger grows if the non-Catholic party is educated, or even less ignorant than the other; or if the non-Catholic criticises or ridicules or sneers at the doctrines of Faith, while the Catholic party may not be sufficiently instructed to defend it. There is so much pride and vanity and self-love in the human heart that by nature we recoil, as if by instinct, from ridicule. Nothing can be more hurtful, unless we are well prepared to repel it by solid and persuasive reason and reasoning. This places the poorly or partially instructed Catholic in great danger when the non-Catholic is such a one as I instance.

It is for this reason and on the same principle that the education, or, rather, knowledge, acquired in the generality of schools and colleges and universities here and elsewhere, becomes so baneful to Catholic young men. A young man, for instance, only moderately acquainted with the reasons and

proofs of Faith, and, as it rather frequently happens, very little accustomed to nourish that Faith in his heart by frequent reception of the Sacraments and by prayer, becomes a student in one of these colleges. Say he studies law or medicine, or he is a student of history or any of the sciences. His professor is a man who has occupied that chair for years with some distinction, at least among his own clientele, and within his own environments. Consequently, he is looked up to by his pupils and by his Catholic pupil. The day comes when in one of his lectures he introduces some of the teachings which have become and are the heritage of every Christian youth, and which are wound around the most delicate tendrils and fibers of his heart and its affections. This professor introduces that doctrine only to ridicule and to overthrow it, without a word said in its defence. The first blow is struck at the root of Faith in the heart of that young man, and every such blow afterward, and there are many, helps the first, until very little remains of the divine virtue of unquestioning Faith.

Now, if such is the case in instances of this kind, what shall we say when the same or like influence comes to a Catholic associated and united with the influence which husband and wife exercise over each other? This is so plain that it is only necessary to state it in order to understand it.

Therefore, the Church annuls marriage between a Catholic and a pagan or infidel. Secondly, she forbids it, under pain of sin, between a Catholic and Protestant. Marriages of this latter class, as we have said earlier, are not of themselves null, because the non-Catholic party, being, as is supposed, baptized, is capable of receiving the Sacrament of Marriage also, even if unwittingly.

But the danger to Faith is scarcely less, nay, more, it is perhaps greater, from the very fact that that party is regarded as Christian, and besides the danger to Faith in both cases to the Catholic spouse, there is also the awful, the almost invincible danger to the offspring of the union; to their faith, to their education and proper Christian training. Examples of this are so numerous that it is only necessary to reflect a moment to bring them to your own mind.

These are the reasons which actuated the Church in insti-

tuting this impediment. Let us weigh them well, and we shall soon understand their gravity.

The Church never grants, let us repeat, without reluctance and sorrow, a dispensation to any Catholic to marry a person who is not a Catholic, no matter whether the person is baptized or not. But even when she does give such permission, to prevent greater evil, she demands inexorably, 1st, that the Catholic party have entire freedom to practice the teachings of Faith. 2d, That the children, offspring of the marriage, be brought up in the Catholic Faith, and 3d, That the non-Catholic will examine the claims of the Church established by Christ, Our Lord, and the Catholic party must pray constantly for the light of Faith for the spouse.

Now how often, when such marriages take place, are these conditions verified? The children will be brought for baptism, it may be, and generally is the case, to be sure. But what of that, if they grow up indifferent to religion, ignorant of its teachings, and careless of putting them in practice? The Church forbids her priests to baptize a child who is not likely to be brought up in the Faith for the reason that Baptism brings with it obligations for the fulfilment of which it is necessary to know the teachings of the Faith. And to be baptized and receive the habit of divine Faith without any training in it afterwards, is, unless death takes the child away before it comes to the use of reason, unchristian. Conclusion: Never marry outside the Church. The risk is too great.

The other impediments to marriage are:—Crime; Vows of Religion (Solemn); the Marriage Bond still existing; and Clandestinity.

Crime. This renders marriage impossible between persons who, holding unlawful mutual intercourse, were partakers in the violent death of the former spouse of either. It will not be necessary to discuss the propriety of constituting this crime an impediment to marriage.

Vows of Religion. Solemn vows, which are rarely emitted in the present discipline of the Church, by which a person consecrates himself forever to the service of God, not only his soul, but even his body. Such consecration gives anything so consecrated entirely to God, so much so that it

cannot be used for any other purpose. Thus churches, chalices, altars, etc., are consecrated, and never can be turned to any profane use. Therefore they cannot be sold. They must be destroyed or melted down, as the case may be.

So, also, Holy Orders consecrate to God and therefore constitute an impediment to marriage; so do solemn vows made by Religious. It may not be without advantage to say a few words on this impediment.

First, I have said solemn vows, because only these constitute an annulling impediment, and in the present discipline of the Church they are rare, outside the ranks of those who have received Holy Orders. Consequently, Religious, instead of emitting solemn vows, make simple vows, which they renew periodically.

With regard to those who receive Holy Orders, the Church, since the very earliest days of her existence, has made as one of the cardinal points of her discipline, that those who enter the ranks of the priesthood and undertake the duties of the priestly office should not be married. St. Jerome, who wrote as early as the fourth century, speaks of this as though every Christian understood it as a matter of course. Tradition tells us, and early sacred historians say, that though some of the Apostles were married before they were called to the Apostolic office, yet, after they were ordained, they and their wives lived apart, consecrating their entire lives to God.

It is true that in the East, Greece, and Asia Minor, there are examples of priests who are married; but this modification of the Church's discipline in such places arises from the circumstances of the country and the race. It must be borne in mind that in no country in the world is it ever tolerated by the Church, or heard of, that any of her clergy marry after they have received Sacred Orders. Sometimes, through great necessity, a married man is ordained, but never is an ordained person married afterward.

Our Protestant brethren pretend to consider this severe, unjust, and oppressive discipline. They forget that all who aspire to the sacred ministry of the priesthood are perfectly free; they know what they aspire to; what life they are about to undertake, and what the Church expects of them. They

are not allowed to rush into the priestly ranks without very serious and protracted thought and deliberation. They spend in their preparation for the awful and arduous duties of the sacerdotal state, many years of study, meditation, and prayer.

During those years they have ample time to examine their inclinations and the tendency of their lives, as well as their aptitude and the strength of their determination. Hence, if they take a false step, it is and can be attributable only to their wilfulness and frailty, and not to the discipline of the Church.

But we may ask why this obligation is imposed on him who aspires to the life of a priest in the New Law. I answer, there are various reasons. There is the fact of the exalted nature of the priestly office itself, far beyond any that was ever discharged by man since the Creation. An office which the angels might fear to undertake, the priestly office makes the priest participate in the virginal priesthood of Jesus Christ. And, as that is perpetual, so it is becoming that it should preserve this glorious attribute and characteristic forever also.

Again, the priesthood of the New Law is necessary for the salvation of men, not like that of the Old. Through the priest, mankind receives the Sacraments while living, and especially in sickness and death. The priest, by his office and character, should be the father and guide of his people; his life should be expended for their welfare. There should be nothing to engross his thoughts to the exclusion of his flock and their welfare.

And again, how very necessary it is that, in times of pestilence and public calamity, the priest should be entirely free from all worldly ties, and be ready to give his life for his flock! How very desirable when danger is near, and the obligation to risk life is imminent, that no mere human sympathies should stand in the way of faithfully discharging the duties of the awful priesthood of Jesus Christ. These and similar reasons are why the Church makes Holy Orders an annulling impediment to Matrimony. This is why, as we know, the office of the priest expands his heart until it becomes really and truly capable of carrying within the circle

of its enduring love every child of Adam, and nerves him to make any sacrifice for the souls of men.

The next impediment is the *Marriage Bond*. That is to say, neither husband nor wife is free to marry while there is any uncertainty about the death of the former spouse. For instance, if they separate for any cause, they must, before contracting a new marriage, be sure that death, which only can do so, has sundered the bond of the former marriage. Consequently, no length of time, nor any other consideration, will render a new marriage lawful under those circumstances.

Clandestinity. The Council of Trent decreed that no person could be validly married except in the presence of the parish priest of bride or bridegroom, or one having his authority. Since Easter Sunday, 1908, no marriage, to give the words of the decree "Ne Temere," "in which both or one of the contracting parties is a baptized Catholic is valid, unless it be celebrated in the presence of two witnesses and of the parish priest of the place of celebration or of some other priest deputed by him."

This ends our explanation of the impediments to marriage, and the reasons why the Church constituted them such.

Now what should be the dispositions of a person entering the matrimonial state, and what the preparation? What is the manner in which the Church desires marriages to be celebrated?

The first and most necessary disposition for those who enter the matrimonial state is, of course, to be in the state of grace. Every properly instructed Christian will readily understand this. Matrimony is a Sacrament; and, moreover, a Sacrament of the living. That is to say, it is one which is intended to augment the sanctifying grace which it supposes to exist already in the soul. Consequently, in order to receive it with due and worthy preparation, it should be preceded by a good Confession and a worthy Communion, just as is done in receiving all the Sacraments of the living, for example, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Extreme Unction.

What, then, can be said of those who, instead of making such a preparation, really seek to marry with scarcely any spiritual preparation at all? I ask any Christian man or

woman who has Faith, how can such marriages be the commencement of happy lives?

In this want of preparation, and in the neglect and carelessness with which the Sacrament of Marriage is received, one may discern the evils which surround the lives of many who marry. Therefore, go to Confession and Holy Communion before marriage, not once only, but frequently, in order that by purity of conscience you may merit from God the blessing of a happy marriage.

The second disposition is an upright intention; a motive which is sanctioned by the end for which marriage was instituted. Now this end intended may be threefold.

The end of marriage may be (a) the mutual assistance which the husband and wife give to and receive from each other in the married state; or (b) the legitimate procreation of children, who will be a consolation to them in this life, and whom they will bring up faithfully for heaven and God. Thus did the young Tobias marry his wife, Sara, taking God to witness that he married, not for the gratification of carnal passion, but solely that in his posterity the name of God might be glorified for all eternity.

Lastly, the end of marriage may be as a remedy for the dangers of concupiscence. This last motive is one which the Apostle himself puts before the mind of the Ephesians. Thus also, St. Gregory, "Let those who bear with difficulty the storms of temptations take refuge in the haven of marriage." Other reasons there may be besides those enumerated, but they must always be secondary, not principal motives.

In the third place, those who marry should seek the consent of their parents or guardians. This is strictly enjoined as contained in the fourth Commandment of God. "Honor thy father and thy mother." But when I say their consent, I mean, of course, their reasonable consent, that is to say, they should put no obstacle in the way of the marriage, if judging according to common prudence and sense the marriage is a proper one.

We now come to the ceremony *itself* of Marriage.

Every Sacrament has matter and form. The matter and form of this Sacrament are the tradition and acceptance, or, in other words, the mutual giving and receiving of the con-

sent of the parties concerned. This is the solemn contract, in virtue of which the two are made one, and the Sacrament received. This is the essence both of the contract and the Sacrament.

The words which express this mutual giving and receiving the consent are words of solemn import, and therefore the moment in which they are pronounced should be regarded and looked forward to as one of the most important moments in life.

As that day and hour and moment approach, time should be spent in serious reflection, and constant prayer and supplication to Almighty God that He would vouchsafe His divine aid to render the union worthy of His presence, as at Cana.

But instead of these solemn thoughts and this serious reflection, we often find that the approaching marriage is made more a subject of pleasantry and frivolity than of anything else. Christians who are instructed in their Faith, and who are penetrated with a sense of its responsibilities, will endeavor to concentrate their thoughts on the awful meaning of their act. They will try to remember that it is not so much the priest as God Himself, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who assists at and witnesses and blesses the marriage, and who regards with especial interest the preparation made for the event and the state in which the Sacrament is received.

I have said that the essence of the contract and the Sacrament consists in the consent expressed mutually. But do not forget that the essence of the Sacrament of Baptism also consists in the pouring of the water and the words and intention; and so of the other Sacraments. Very few words and very few moments are expended in the conferring of Sacraments, or in the execution of the most awful and most sublime acts of religion. Take, for example, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Extreme Unction, etc. And yet behold with what prolonged and solemn ceremonies the Church surrounds all these acts. Why? In order to prepare us for the graces which they bear for us. In order to give us a due conception of their exalted nature. In order that we should receive them with the reverence and fear and love, and thanksgiving,

which, as the most holy of God's gifts, they presuppose to exist in our hearts.

For this reason the Church also in her wisdom does not confine the ceremony of marriage to the mere expression of consent, but she surrounds that expression with other and most beautiful ceremonies, in order to elevate that solemn act still more in the eyes of her children.

She takes a ring, as the symbol of unbroken and ever-enduring love, and, blessing it, places it between the fingers of the bridegroom, that he may put it upon his bride's finger, as the pledge and external sign of constant, mutual, Christian love.

Moreover, she has instituted in her sacred liturgy a Mass expressly for those who are married; in which every prayer is made for the purpose of invoking the blessing of God upon the marriage which has just been made. So very important is this that only in the Mass can the nuptial blessing be given. And of so much importance is this nuptial blessing in the eyes of the Church and the Vicar of Christ, that our late Holy Father declared that every Catholic should be exhorted to receive it, no matter how long they had been married, if they had not previously received it.

What, then, shall we think of those who are anxious to marry without Mass; who do not wish to receive the Body of the Lord? Ah, if it happens that the occasion should arise for you, I exhort, with all the energy of my soul, that you should follow the desire of the Church in this vital act of your life.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PART I

“If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his own house, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an infidel” (I Tim. v. 8).

How wonderfully displayed is the wisdom of the Creator in the works of His hands! From the lowest grade of being to man, the most superior, the only, but grand, image of the Eternal, there appears to the contemplative mind a harmony so beautiful, a dependence so mutual and unbroken, and an adaptation of parts to the one great whole so perfect and well regulated, that the Authorship is almost instinctively ascribed to Infinite Wisdom. If we consider Nature’s dynasties, we cannot but admire the necessary but happy relation which they bear to one another. The animal kingdom cannot subsist without the vegetable, neither can the vegetable subsist without the mineral, which in turn receives nutriment for its preservation and perfection from the other two. Again, if we observe more closely, we find that every being in nature has its own end to fulfil, that every grade tends to the conservation of its immediate superior, and that all conjointly are subservient to the use of man. But has man himself no end to fulfil, since all other works of Creation only contribute to his utility and happiness? Is he made for himself alone, or for the enjoyment of those things which are subordinate to his will? Did he come forth from his Maker’s hands only to rule material nature, to be happy in his dominion for a short time, and then, like a faded flower, which has yielded forth fragrance for a few days, perish forevermore?

No, man, too, has his end. An end as superior to that of all other creatures as his immortal soul is to their fading

existence; as the enjoyment of the Infinite is to that of the finite. For the end of man is the enjoyment of the Creator Himself. And here, again, we may ask, does he, *at least*, obtain his end like all other creatures? No, for to him alone is given the power of knowing his end; to him alone is given the power of choosing the object of his happiness, real or imaginary; all other beings *necessarily* fulfil the end of their creation; *freedom* is his prerogative alone.

But though he is free in choosing the object of his happiness, yet he was created for *one* object, for one ultimate end, and that is, to serve God here, and be eternally happy with Him hereafter. "With everything else we can be occupied, but God alone can satisfy our desires," says St. Bernard. And our divine Lord tells us in His Gospel to "Seek first the kingdom of God," and that "all things else," as secondary, "shall be added unto us." If, then, we perseveringly seek that, God Himself will be our "reward exceeding great;" but if we deviate from it in the folly of our hearts, eternal misery will be the punishment of our evil deserts. It is, therefore, of the most vital importance for us to obtain that end; and as it cannot be attained without placing adequate means, it is of consequent and equal importance to place those means. But as the easy attainment of any end depends on the perfection of the means, so also by how much the more imperfect the means are, by so much is it the more difficult to attain the end. It behooves us, therefore, to perfect as much as possible the means which God has given us of obtaining our eternal salvation.

What, then, are these means? And how are we to perfect them? In answer I will say, God has given us faculties, on the proper or improper use of which depends the reward or loss of eternal life. We are endowed with an intellect to know His immutable truth, and a will to love His infinite goodness. The perfection of these noble and Godlike faculties, and, therefore, the ease or difficulty of obtaining salvation, He has left in our own power.

Now the only natural means of their perfection is by a good Christian Education, for by this we obtain a knowledge of the truths of God; by it we are persuaded that our only important affair is eternal salvation; by it we are taught our

duties to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves; and by it we are taught to reduce to practice the knowledge of these duties.

Behold, then, the subject I would propose for your consideration to-day—the nature of Christian Education; the necessity and obligation of imparting it to children; and the manner in which it is to be imparted. And do Thou, O Holy Spirit, whose divine mind is the subject of unchanging truth, vouchsafe to bestow on us a ray of Thy holy light, that, convinced of this great truth, we may adopt the necessary means to practice it.

What, then, is Education? Education, so called from two words (*e-duco*), which signify to refine or perfect, may be defined, “the training and development of the faculties in the moral, intellectual, and physical order.” As it comes, however, within our present sphere and purpose, it is more properly considered the intellectual and moral training of any person to augment the welfare of society, and to attain his soul’s salvation. But what is this training? And, first, in what does this refinement of the intellect consist? Is it a knowledge only of the theoretical and abstruse sciences of human things? Does it consist in the investigation of the planetary system, and in being able to enumerate with the most delicate nicety the fixed and revolving bodies of the heavens? In reckoning up with artistic skill the time of their revolution, and describing their density and bulk with perfect accuracy? Is it a mere knowledge of the laws of motion, and the inherent properties of matter? Is it to scrutinize the reservoirs of the earth, and tell with precision the age of the strata which lie buried within its bosom during past centuries? Perhaps it is only an accurate knowledge of subtle reasonings or of mathematics or philosophy which tend to make the intelligence more acute, so that we may be able to measure the surface of the earth, or detect with almost intuitive vision the fallacy of a sophistical argument, and understand clearly the strength of an abstract demonstration. Or, perhaps, it is a knowledge of the anatomical structure of animals, of their organs and formation, and the laws which regulate their constitutions. Or maybe that it consists in being conversant with the laws of nations, with their lan-

guages, habits, and customs; in tracing, with discriminating eye, the peculiarities of dialects, and being a perfect master of the rules which regulate the symbols of man's ideas? Does, I say, the intellectual training of which we speak consist in any one of these, or is it even a mere combination of all? No. Without any one of these sciences, or with all collectively, we can acquire our end; and, on the other hand, salvation may be lost, even though we should have attained an accurate knowledge of all. For where are the nations in history's pages that were more conversant with natural sciences than ancient Greece and Rome, and what people were more degraded in their habits, or more debauched in their morals? They cultivated the arts and sciences; their orators were renowned throughout the world; their poets were the idols of the pagan world; their dialectics and philosophy were studied as the perfection of human nature; and the laws of their sages and rulers are, even to this day, treasured as some of the greatest masterpieces of wisdom that ever emanated from the human intellect.

And yet with all this learning and science, what was the state of their morals; and how did they attain their end? Alas! They bent their knees in adoration before the works of their own hands. They worshiped imaginary deities, and made the gratification of their basest passions the end of their existence. Every evil desire had its deity or deified guardian, and every crime was patronized by some unknown god. "For professing themselves to be wise," says the Apostle, "they became fools, and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves. . . . And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense . . . who, having known the justice of God, did not understand that they, who do such things, are worthy of death" (Rom. i. 22-32).

And here we might adduce in confirmation the example of St. Augustine, who tells us in his own Confessions that to the unChristian education which his father gave him he

attributed the follies and vices of his early days before conversion's light had shed its bright beams upon him. A Christian education, therefore, does not consist in a knowledge only of those sciences which we have enumerated.

In what, then, does it consist? This we shall learn by remembering what its end should be. The end of all education should be, first, to serve God, and, secondly, to contribute to the well-being of society, whose very life depends on the conduct of its individual members, and for whose interests we are divinely commanded to be solicitous. The first and chief characteristic, then, of education must be, that it be religious. Religion must be its basis, religion must be its conserving ingredient throughout, and religion must be the last tincture of its completion. Salvation is to be gained. It cannot be gained without serving God: to serve God, He Himself must be known. And as it is true by how much the more religious education is, by so much does it become more conducive to man's welfare; so, also, inasmuch as religion is discarded from education, in so much does it become the bane of his eternal salvation. How foolish, then, are those who labor with unwearied exertions to acquire a name in the scientific world at the expense of their immortal souls, obtaining for themselves a notoriety which, perhaps, is only the base handmaid of the abdication of the "sweet yoke" of Jesus Christ, and the revealed truths of His holy Gospel. Truly are they the vineyard which produces the wild and poisonous grapes of worldly wisdom, instead of the sweet-flavored grapes of the wisdom of God. Of such I would ask, Will knowledge and worldly wisdom obtain for you more renown than they did for Solon or Seneca—and yet of what advantage were they to them without a knowledge of God? Will your scepticism and abstruse philosophic researches acquire for you notoriety greater than that of Pythagoras or Aristotle—and yet what does it profit them now, if they have lost their immortal souls? Oh! Foolish men, who, imagining you are wise, make yourselves foolish, vainly deeming the shadow to be true substance, and the substance mere shadow! Not much less unwise are they who, that they may attain a knowledge of human sciences, seek education where the absence of all religious *teaching*, the touchstone of infidelity, is

professedly acknowledged, where religious *practices* are ignored as unnecessary, perhaps as effeminate, and unbecoming the enlightenment of the age. Oh! Senseless young man, will you, too, run the risk of the shipwreck of your faith for the mere acquisition of a superior grade in society? "Thou fool, this night, perhaps, thy soul will be required of thee!" What will thy position avail thee then? What then will a famous name profit thee? A name is but the flattery of a cheating world, which pleases the ear for a short time, and leaves nothing behind but the dying echo of an empty sound. Honor is nothing else than a phantom, whose shadowy appearance delights the fancy, but when we would grasp for its substance, it vanishes forever from our view. Worldly pleasures are but beings of a moment's existence, the handmaids of passion, which produce in the soul a nausea, an unwholesome disgust for everything ennobling to man. And yet it is for these things they seek, who content themselves to be educated where religion is considered a mere social advantage; where are imbibed those false principles whose offshoots are pride, vanity, and contempt of parents and superiors. Oh! yes, how frequently have you not heard those falsely educated speak of their absent parents as if they were contemptible in their eyes, and given them only to supply their extravagant wants! How frequently have they not designated the wisdom of their experienced years as the intolerable folly of old age? They disdain to pronounce their names, giving them nicknames instead! But perhaps they do not stop even here; perhaps those lips, which in childhood were taught to lisp their parents' names with affection, now heap maledictions on their venerable days! And this in their very presence! Nay, more: those hands which were formed in the womb of a loving mother, are now perhaps uplifted in Satanic wrath to strike to the earth the instruments of their very existence. Those who were looked forward to, in earnest hope, as the comfort of their parents' old age, and the solace of their declining years, are now perhaps fast bringing a silvery tinge to the venerable hairs of the authors of their being. They are, perhaps, the cause of the incessant grief of a widowed mother; or of breaking the manly heart of a loving father, and of evoking bitter tears from those

eyes which, but a few years ago, looked on them with a parent's pride, but which will now soon close in the sleep of premature death because of the misguided steps of wayward children. Oh! is this education, which is the fruitful source of such baneful evils, the fertile germ of such unnatural results? If so, in vain do the very first of nature's principles suggest filial affection! In vain does reason proclaim the congruity and justice of parental respect! In vain has the Eternal, Himself, on Sinai's Mount, given us a precept which says, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

Ah, no, this cannot be that training which a Christian education necessarily supposes; this cannot be the training of the intellect in the knowledge of truth; for truth is in conformity with right reason and religion; truth is one, great, eternal, unchanging as the Immutable Himself, and identical with the everlasting verity of the divine mind. A Christian education will teach us to obey God, to worship Him as the sovereign Lord of life, and love Him as our munificent Benefactor. It will teach us to revere, in our parents, the authority of our Creator, and to look on their anxious care of us as a proof of the watchful eye of divine Providence. It will teach us to procure for them every comfort, as reason suggests or religion prescribes. It will teach us to contribute to their social happiness, and that of all the domestic circle, as far as our position will permit; it will teach us to deal with our fellow-man in justice and equity; it will teach us to make frankness and candor the standard of our intercourse, and decri every thing that savors of dissimulation; it will teach us magnanimity, that noble principle of human nature, which despises flattery, and gives to every one according to his deserts, knowing that "concord of brethren and love of neighbors are approved before God;" it will teach us, in a word, our duties to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves.

But does a theoretical knowledge of these truths comprise all Christian education? Does a Christian education consist in a mere conviction that these things are so? Is it, in a word, only the *intellect* that is to receive culture? No, there is something even more essentially requisite to complete a Christian education. Education, we have said, is the

refinement and perfection of those faculties by which man attains the important end of his being; it is a moral, as well as intellectual cultivation, by the aid of which he walks "In holiness and justice before the Lord all the days of his life." Moral cultivation, as its very name sufficiently implies, is not the mere theory of right and wrong—it supposes that this theory is made the standard of our actions; it supposes that the will *act* in conformity with the knowledge of the intellect; in a word, that the unmixed rectitude of our actions will be demonstrative of the reality of our belief. "By their fruits you shall know them," says our divine Lord. Let us take a familiar example to illustrate what we say: Look at the agriculturist, who is daily employed in planting and pruning his vines. He does not rest satisfied in knowing that they will grow if properly sown—no. He sets himself to work to prepare the soil for the plant which he is about to sow. When it is sown, he watches with diligence, lest some unwholesome weed should come in contact with its tender shoot, or shut out the air and sun from its growing stalk, and prevent its coming to maturity. He softens the earth around its root and waters it at intervals, that it may imbibe the nourishing sap which preserves its life; thus he continues from day to day, and from year to year, until at length the little, tiny plant has ripened into a flourishing vine, and rewards him a hundredfold for his labor, by the heavy produce of its clustering grapes.

So is it with Christian education. The *knowledge* of duty will not form the education of a Christian. He must reduce that knowledge to *practice*, for "knowledge without charity," says the Apostle, "only puffeth up." His *will*, the formal principle of his deeds, must be inured to the growth of good habits. Those habits must be watched in the very germ; the noxious weeds of evil must be kept aloof; they must be carefully irrigated with the waters of grace which religion plentifully affords; they must be pruned, with prudent judgment, in their riper growth, until at length they are proof against the contagion of a wicked world. Yes, the *will* must be taught to bend in humble submission to the law of God; it must be accustomed to accept with resignation that well-meant correction of His paternal hand, and lovingly thank

Him for the many and bounteous favors which He bestows with wise dispensation; it must be habituated to rejoice with the neighbor in the success of his undertakings; to sympathize with him when their result is unfavorable, and cheer him when grief would wear down his fortitude, and darken his path with its lowering cloud. Thus shall the faculty of *will* be trained to act in conformity with the truth which intellect proposes, and reason and religion indicate; thus shall education be complete, and the attainment of salvation secured.

This, indeed, is Christian education; this, indeed, is accomplishing that for which we were sent into the world. "This is eternal life, that we may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." And now, we may ask, does a Christian education suppose the absence of natural and human sciences? No, it does not. So far from it, that provided they are based on religious principles, and sought for within the boundaries of faith and good morals, they are always most commendable, useful to society, and ennobling to man. It is true, no doubt, that a Christian education does not necessarily suppose them, as we have before said; for there are many and glorious saints who were totally ignorant of them, and who now, nevertheless, stand around the throne of the spotless Lamb, as dear to their Creator as those saints who during life were acquainted with nature's mysteries. Such is St. Isidore, whose days were spent in following the ploughshare and cultivating the land, and who is now crowned with a diadem more glorious than ever sat on imperial or kingly brow. Such are the Apostles, the very foundation of the Church after Jesus Christ. Such are many other illustrious saints, who "knew nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," whose life was a perpetual struggle against the hardships and miseries of the world, and who thereby "whitened their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and having come out of great tribulation, now sing benediction and praise in sight of the throne of God."

Seeing, then, that a Christian education neither excludes nor necessarily supposes a knowledge of human sciences, when squared with the principles of Faith and morals; seeing that it is diametrically opposed to such knowl-

edge, when carried so far, or, rather, when *abused*, in such a manner as to come in collision with the dogmas of Faith, or the principles of sound morality; seeing that it is essentially religious and social, that it consists in the knowledge of those truths, and the practice of those virtues, which directly or indirectly tend to the service of God and the advantage of society; seeing, in a word, the object and nature of a Christian education, the next thing I would place before you is the great necessity of imparting such an education to your children, and the consequent obligation you are under of doing so.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PART II

It is true, indeed, that, *absolutely speaking*, salvation may be obtained though we are not blessed with a Christian education in our youth; yet taking into consideration the ordinary course of nature, it may be stated as incontrovertible that as a person is trained in his early days, so shall he live in after years, and so shall depend upon his youthful culture the happiness or misery of his future lot. "Train up a child according to his way," says the Wise Man, "and when he is old he shall not depart from it." If "man, then, is prone to evil from his youth," what shall he be, if that time which is the proper season for implanting virtuous habits, be spent in idleness and dissipation? What shall he be, when the noxious weeds of passion and unlawful pleasures be suffered to spring up unheeded and unchecked in his youthful and unformed mind? When that *will*, indifferent as yet, is allowed to mould itself according to the evil bent of degenerate habits; and when these habits, like to forest trees, which might have been plucked up while yet saplings, but now that they have grown into mighty oaks, yield only to the sharp-edged axe of the one who cuts them down? Oh, parents, if you educate not your children in a Christian manner, I tell you they will become the bane of society, and perhaps the instruments of their own perdition! If you do not plant the seed now, when the earth is mellow and fit for cultivation, I tell you the time will come when it will be parched with the heat of passion, and the waters of religious teaching will be rendered incapable of producing the desired effect. Would you know why iniquity prevails to such an extent in the world? I tell you it is for want of Christian education, for "the things that thou hast not gathered in

thy youth, how shalt thou find them in thy old age?" says Ecclesiasticus. "It is as difficult," writes St. Jerome, "to efface the first impressions made upon tender minds as it is to restore to its primitive whiteness the wool which has once been dyed." How truly, then, does the great St. Bernard say that we "need seek no other cause why men are to be found destitute of every virtue in their old age, than that they acquired them not in their youth." Oh! then, parents, I would say to you in the words of the inspired Sage, "instruct your children, and bow down their necks, from their youth." I would ask you, if you love your children, to instruct them properly, for with this instruction their salvation is intimately connected. I would entreat you, if you are interested in their welfare, to educate them religiously, lest the words of holy Job be fulfilled in them, lest "the vices of their youth should fill their bones, and sleep with them in the dust." I would exhort you to watch over their early education with the greatest care, lest ignorance and impiety occasion their eternal death, and they themselves, in undying and impotent remorse, curse the day you gave them their existence.

Yes, parents, if you neglect the education of your children, I say to you in the language of St. Chrysostom: "You are their murderers, and the more cruel, as this tends to the destruction and everlasting death of the soul." See, then, the necessity of a Christian education! Youthful customs, having a necessary influence on the mind of man in mature years, if well-regulated and moral are productive of peace and happiness in this life, and are conducive to the salvation of his immortal soul; but if degenerate and immoral, they become ultimately a source of misery here, and eternal destruction hereafter.

Convinced of the necessity of education for the welfare of your children's souls, the very impulse of parental affection suggests the obligation of imparting it; reason accords with the voice of instinctive nature; and religion seals the declaration of both with the authority of its divine sanction. That natural instinct proclaims this obligation needs not to be demonstrated. Unless a parent has done violence to his very nature, and divested himself of every principle of

humanity, there must exist within his bosom that tenderness which even natural creatures have for their offspring; he must at least be possessed of that feeling which tells the beasts of the field, or even the very birds of the air, to protect their young from the hunter's snare, or the fowler's net. And if he be possessed of that feeling he will instinctively see his obligation of guarding, by a good education, against the eternal destruction of his children's souls.

But reason is no less urgent in insisting on your obligation, for why, let me ask, were you given your children by Almighty God? Was it that you might rear them up in the indulgence of their passions, and supply every means to gratify their immoderate desires? Was it that you might amass gold and silver for them, and leave them, at your death, the proprietors of wealth and luxury? Or was it that you might make them rulers over the land, and transmit to them a name famous in the eyes of a false and flattering world? Ah! not for any of these ends did the Almighty bless you with children. He gave them to you that you might prepare them for Himself and eternal bliss. He gave them to you that you might teach them His own divine Law, to "walk in holiness and justice before Him all their days." He gave them to you that you might teach them to adore Him as their Creator, to fear Him as their Judge, and to love Him as the best of Fathers. He gave them to you, that by "honoring you," they "may have joy in their own children."

He gave them to you to be the staff of your elder days by their virtuous conduct, and the comfort of your fading years by their fidelity to Him and you. He gave them to you, in a word, that they may be rendered by you useful members of society, and heirs to His own everlasting kingdom. See, then, how reason demands your earnest care and attention to educate them in a religious and Christian manner, for, such an education being, as we have said, one of the principal, nay, even *the* principal means of attaining the end for which they were given you, justice and equity assert the existence of your obligation.

But religion insists on your obligation even more strongly, if possible, than either natural instinct or reason. The

Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments pronounce it, the saints of God and the Fathers of the Church most distinctly attest it.

I would remind you of the explicit and awful words of my text: "If a man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his own house, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an infidel." He has denied the Faith, for if the Gospel of Jesus Christ commands us to love even our enemies, to assist them in their spiritual and corporal necessities, how much more, then, are Christians obliged to provide for the welfare of those who not only are not enemies or strangers, but even their very offspring! He is worse than an infidel, for even an infidel will endeavor to secure the happiness of his household. But hear the words of Ecclesiasticus (xvi. 3, 4): "Better is one that feareth God than a thousand ungodly children. And it is better to die without children than to leave ungodly children." And again he says, "He that instructeth his son shall be praised in him . . . Bow down his neck while he is young . . . lest he grow stubborn."

Parents, if you regard the words of eternal truth; if you fear the omnipotence of an essentially just God; do not shut your eyes to the obligation of educating your children piously. If you value the salvation of your own immortal souls, do not forget your duty, but fulfil it with fidelity, for I tell you that you shall one day have to render a strict account at the unerring Tribunal of Infinite Justice as to how you have discharged it. Yes, parents, you are the guardians of your children. They are that vineyard which your divine Master has given you to cultivate, and woe to you if you are not found faithful when you are called to give an account of your stewardship.

No wonder, then, that the saints of God, and pastors of the Church, at all times were most solicitous in exhorting parents to educate their children in a Christian-like manner. No wonder that in their writings and discourses they inculcated it as of the utmost importance. No wonder that we find them make use of every argument within their reach to demonstrate its necessity. No wonder that we hear the great St. Chrysostom speak in the following terms: "I ask

you parents," he says, "if you should see your son oppressed with hunger, would you refuse him assistance? Will you then despise him when he is dying for the want of the food of holy instruction? By what right can you claim the name of parents, and be capable of such an act? For, whereas the hunger of the soul is far more grievous than that of the body, because it ends in a more lamentable death, wherefore you should take more precaution to prevent its occurrence." "Therefore from the very beginning let youth be trained up to the practice of every good work," says the holy Basil. Can anything, I ask, more clearly express the obligation of parents to instruct their children? Hearken to the exhortation of the saints of God. Attend to the wise counsels of those whose days were spent in the strict observance of His holy law; whom He protected with providential hand in trials and persecutions, whom He appointed "watchmen of Israel's house," and specially favored with the light of His Holy Spirit. Hearken, I say, to those unerring guides in the way of the Lord. Listen to their admonitions, and acknowledge yourselves, now at least, convinced of your duty to train your children in a Christian manner.

And now we have seen what education is. We have seen how a true education differs from a false one; we have seen the nature of a true education; that it consists of the training of the will as well as of the intellect. We have shown the necessity of a true Christian education for children; we have shown the consequent obligation of parents to instruct their children; we have shown that the first principles of nature suggest it; and that reason and religion are most urgent in declaring the self-same duty. It remains for us then, only to see how a Christian education is to be imparted. This we learn from St. Augustine. It is to be imparted by *discipline*, which he says is twofold, *viz.*, *instruction* and *correction*; the former of which he again tells us is perfected by *love*, the latter by *fear*.

First, then, children are to be educated by instructing them. This again is done in a twofold manner, by *word* and by *example*. By word, they are to be taught their duties to God, to their neighbors, and to themselves. And by ex-

ample they are to be induced more and more to the practice of what they have learned by oral instruction.

Would you know how to instruct your children in their duties? Take as your model holy Tobias, whom the Sacred Text praises for his attention to his parental obligations; who, "when yet a boy, deprived himself of his goods for his fellow-captives;" and who, when a son was born to him, in after life, "taught him from his infancy to fear God and to abstain from sin." It is, moreover, recorded in Scripture of this holy old man, that, after having lived a long time in sanctity and justice, and having faithfully discharged his duty as father and master of his household, he was visited with afflictions; and having prayed God to release him from his earthly pilgrimage, he thought that he was about to die. He therefore called to him young Tobias, his son, that he might bless him, and give him his final exhortation. And when he was come in he said to him, "Hear, my son, the words of my mouth, and lay them as a foundation in thy heart. When God shall take my soul, thou shalt honor thy mother all the days of thy life, for thou must be mindful what great perils she suffered for thee. And all the days of thy life have God in thy mind, and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the Commandments of the Lord, our God."

Behold, the first and most necessary part of the instruction of children—to know the mysteries of religion, to know the Commandments of God; to keep them, and avoid sin. But this is not all, for the aged Patriarch exhorted his son to "give alms out of his substance, to turn not away his face from any poor person; to be merciful according to his ability; to give much out of abundance, and even out of little to bestow willingly a little." He exhorted him "Never to suffer pride to reign in his mind nor in his words; never to do to another what he would hate to have done to himself; to give bread to the hungry and needy; to clothe the naked with his garments; to bless God at all times, and to desire of Him to direct his ways, and that all His counsels might abide in him."

This is how parents should instruct their children; this, indeed, is perfect instruction; this, indeed, is a perfect model

for parents. Do as Tobias did, and you will meet the reward of Tobias. Discharge your duty to your children as he did to his, and God will bless you in their love, even as He blessed Tobias, and gave sight to his aged eyes, that they might look on the face of his beloved child. Imitate Tobias, and call your children frequently around you; tell them to fear and bless God, to have Him always in their minds, and to beseech Him to keep them from sin. Teach them to bend their knees daily, in adoration and thanksgiving before His Infinite Majesty; teach them the truths of His holy Gospel, and the knowledge of His sacred Mysteries as the foundation of their justification; teach them obedience to His holy Church, and her unerring doctrine, as the infallible guide of their faith; teach them a love of His holy law and reverence for His holy Sacraments as the channels of divine grace; teach them justice and universal charity as the great feature of the children of God; teach them to be upright and candid in their intercourse, and righteous in their every action, as becoming Christians; teach them to set at naught the vanity of worldly things, for they are made to inherit the treasures of eternity; teach them true humility of heart, according to the example of Jesus Christ; teach them to flee the very appearance of evil society, as the sure path to their disgrace here, and their perdition hereafter; tell them to beware of bad books, lest the poisonous draught of their impure doctrine may occasion their eternal death. Teach them, in a word, to value above everything the friendship and favor of God, and the salvation of their immortal souls. Thus you will discharge the obligation of instructing your children by word; thus you will fulfil the command which the Lord gave to His chosen people through the lips of His inspired Lawgiver, "And the words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children and grand-children, and teach them to thy sons and grandsons."

But you are bound to instruct your children not only by word, but also by example, for natural impulse will teach a child to imitate the deeds of his parents. Hence it is, that no matter how your children are taught by precept, if you give them not good example, all is of no avail, for "Scan-

dalous parents," says St. Thomas, "in a certain way compel their children to lead bad lives, inasmuch as nature teaches them to follow their parents." And St. Bernard tells us that "Bad parents are not parents, but murderers." Woe, then, to you, if, by the scandalous depravity of your own lives, you become the occasion of the spiritual ruin of your children. Woe to that father who, through the hellish thirst he himself has for intoxicating drinks, has taught his son to raise the poisonous draught to his lips, and from being a youth of virtuous habits has indicated to him the way to the tavern and gambling table. Woe to that mother, who, by neglecting her own daily duties to God and to her neighbor, has taught her children to neglect theirs, and to consider only as secondary the priceless treasure of their salvation. Woe to you parents, if by the use of intemperate or immoderate language, you have taught your children to pollute their lips with blasphemous or unseemly expressions. Oh! Parents, remember the enormity of the sin of scandal to your children, for if Jesus Christ has pronounced a woe "on him through whom scandal cometh," if He has declared it better for him who shall scandalize any of His little ones, that a mill-stone were suspended from his neck, and that he were cast into the sea, if, I say, our divine Lord has thus spoken of *any one* who giveth scandal, what shall He say to parents? Those who are bound by every law, natural and divine, to train their children to virtuous habits, and who, instead of doing so, positively direct them in the path to vice by their own infamous example! Oh! Guardians of heaven's heirs, woe, I say, to you again, if you traitorously cause them to lose their inheritance! Protectors of the first-begotten of Jesus Christ, woe to you if you teach them to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage; nay, worse than a mess of pottage, for the filthy lucre of sin.

Give your children, then, good example; attend assiduously to the welfare of your own souls, and thus prove to them that they are to value theirs. Forget not your morning and evening devotions, that they, too, may learn to consecrate the first and last moment of the day to their Creator. Conduct them, in their very infancy, to the temple of God, and there recommending them to His divine protec-

tion, teach them by your reverence and piety to "love the beauty of the Lord's house, and the place where His glory dwelleth." Be devoted to Mary, that they may love to shelter themselves beneath her clemency. Be kind and charitable to your neighbors, both in word and work, that they, too, may practice the like virtues. Thus you will give good example to your children; thus you will complete the instruction which you have given them by word; for "example is better than precept." And thus will that part of discipline be imparted which, according to St. Augustine, is perfected by love.

But we have said that *correction* also forms a necessary part of Christian discipline. This we are moreover assured of by the Apostle of the Gentiles, "And you fathers bring up your children in the discipline and correction of the Lord." And Ecclesiasticus says, "He that loveth his son, chastiseth him." You must correct the wayward dispositions of your children. How are you to do so? Not, truly, in that manner which, alas, is but too prevalent among parents, by chastising them in fits of anger and passion; and reproving them on the caprice of a moment. Such chastisement could be more properly termed revenge than correction, and brings with it more evil than good consequences. It arouses in the minds of children a feeling that it is only self-interest or tyrannical authority that suggests it; and tends to awaken in them not the salutary fear which they should have of their parents, nor respect for their counsels, but a capricious and servile fear by which they dread them as their despotic governors, but love them not as parents. Do not chastise your children in this manner. Correct them with calmness of mind and deportment, but at the same time with firmness of purpose, indicative of your interest in their welfare. "How much better is it to reprove than to be angry," says the Wise Man. If you perceive yourself, then, affected with immoderate passion when your child has committed a fault, defer his correction until such time as love and duty alone suggest the necessity of reproof. Thus, and thus alone, will your children experience the salutary effects of correction; thus will they entertain a wholesome fear of your parental authority, and, persuaded of the purity of your motive, gradually return to a sense of their duty. And thus will

Christian education be perfected and productive of the most beneficial results.

And now, My Brethren, we have seen what education is. We have seen how a true differs from a false education. We have seen the nature of a Christian education: What is *opposed* to it, and what is *necessary* to constitute it, and what is useful in order to perfect it. We have shown how the intellect must be enlightened and the will governed. We have, moreover, shown how necessary it is for children, because of its intimate connection with their lives, and their eternal happiness. We have demonstrated the obligation of parents to impart it, from natural instinct, from reason, and from religion. And lastly, we have seen how it is to be imparted, by careful instruction of word and example, and by a wholesome correction of the evil tendencies of youth. We have seen all this, and now it only remains for you, before you leave the temple of God, to take the important resolution of educating your children yourselves after the manner we have laid down, within your own sphere, and taking care that their education abroad will be conformable to the principles of Christian morality.

To this I would exhort you, if you value your children's welfare. To this I would exhort you, for love of your own immortal souls, whose salvation in a great measure depends on the faithful discharge of this duty. I would exhort you to it for love of that good God, who blessed you in the gift of children, and made you their guardians that you might prepare them for Himself. I would exhort you to it for love of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who died to redeem them, and bought their salvation with the price of His most precious blood. I would exhort you to it for love of the Holy Spirit, whose temples they are, and the impress of whose divine countenance is indelibly stamped on their youthful souls. I would exhort you to it for love of Mary, whose immaculate heart yearns to clasp to her bosom the ransomed children of her beloved Son.

Remember the eternal love of your Creator, frustrate not the blood of His only-begotten Son.

Adorn the habitations of the Holy Spirit with the ornaments of virtue and piety, so pleasing in His divine sight.

Do not deprive the Mother of God of that happiness which she so ardently desires. Educate your children as becomes Christians, and they will honor you in your old age. They will bear with you in your infirmities, and comfort you in your afflictions; they will pronounce your names with blessings when your bodies shall have returned to their parent clay; and they will be for you the pledge of that immortal life which shall be the reward of every true parent, and which I earnestly beseech God to grant you all. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

PART III
ON CATHOLIC BELIEF: FOR MIXED
CONGREGATIONS

IS A MAN MORALLY FREE TO CHOOSE HIS RELIGION?

THERE are few people, even of a moderate age and of moderate observation, who are not occasionally struck with the great changes which this world of ours periodically undergoes. What a different aspect it presents to our view to-day from that which it presented when even the youngest of us were children! Look, for instance, at the numerous upheavals of society in Europe within our own recollection: Rulers have been displaced, one after another; dynasties have been overthrown by the dozen; countries have been deprived of their national existence, and are known now only as a part of the conquering nation; while all seem to be marching on to a condition of democracy under various guises, with sure pace, though in some cases their steps are slow and faltering.

It is not within our sphere to say what we think of the doctrine of accomplished facts, or of the sort of ownership which mere force begets; or to remark on the effects for good or evil which such a sudden change to democracy might bring about in countries where tradition has sanctioned—and, as it were, consecrated—social relations under a different form. But, having drawn your attention to these very grave changes in the political world, I pass on to the world of science and art. Here again we are confronted with the motto of “Advance.” What imagination ever fancied, only a century ago, that human ingenuity could effect the changes which have been brought about by the steam engine and the telegraph? And yet the invention of these extraordinary channels of intercourse has already become old in the sight of the perfection to which they have been brought. We have pierced the air and penetrated the earth and sea; we have destroyed distance, at least in its effects.

As in the political, we entered into no investigation as to the nature of the changes we remark, so neither shall we stop to inquire the influence which these scientific inventions have had on society, considered merely in its temporal aspect. This is a question of political economy.

Those questions to which I have referred, although they do not *directly* touch the present subject, are still indirectly mixed up with it. For as all science comes from God, and as the development of the mysteries of the natural order is nothing more than a reflection on the human mind of the knowledge of the divine Mind which created them; and as all true philosophy leads us back to the true source of our being and knowledge, and directs us to their fulfilment, which is the end of our existence, so also in the same proportion do those things, when uncontrolled by religion, lead us astray to seek for an ideal which can never be realized. Reason is a safe guide when within its own sphere, but place it outside its sphere, and it becomes like a sea captain in a prairie. When we see a man cross a stream, we can say he is able, under the same circumstances, to again cross an equally broad one; but to conclude from this that he is able to jump over a broad river would be regarded as folly. With these few observations, I proceed to remark the changes in the religious world. This progress in the political and scientific world (the accuracy of which expression might be questioned), so fills men's minds who look on things from a merely human point of view, and so exalts them in their own estimation, that they begin to think they can do without religion, or, if they have any, it must be subject to the same principles as scientific conclusions; that it must be changeable; that it must blot out from its category any doctrine which does not conform to theirs, and substitute instead some one which will savor of novelty. Hence you see the origin and mistake of indifferentists. They introduce into the domain of religion, which is supernatural and divine, principles of science, which is natural and human. They take reason from its sphere, and make it their guide in the region of Faith and of its mysteries which, when they cannot explain by their limited knowledge, they expunge, and, as if expecting that every divine mystery should be comprehended

by them, they say, unless religion is based on our principles, we cannot accept it.

What is the result of all this? Why, the result is plain; every man, or rather every religious body who has an interest in, but no attachment to any particular doctrine, changes creed. The fact of a doctrine having been revealed or not revealed is no object. They must change or lose their popularity. And hence they change.

This is the reason why so many various forms of religion have sprung up, and are daily springing up in the world. Hence have we Evangelicals, True Episcopal Protestants, the High Churchman, the Low Churchman, and the Ritualist, all begotten of Anglicanism. Hence have we the Scotch Free Church, the Scotch Free and Independent, the Congregationalist, the New School Presbyterian, the Old School Presbyterian, and the United New and Old School Presbyterian, all descendants of the old Presbyterian doctrines. Hence have we the Wesleyan Methodists, the Methodist Episcopal, the Methodist Free Churchman and the Baptist, all improving, or at least reforming, the doctrines of Mr. Wesley. And I will add, hence have we also that larger class who are quite indifferent to any form, the free-thinker and the man who has no religion whatsoever. All these keep pace with the age, and some outrun others in the race, and in anxiety to accommodate themselves to demands. In a word, they seem to hold precisely the same position as mere human science does.

Amidst this universal change, however, in the political, scientific, and religious world, amidst and besides all this change of all things human, there is one phase of religious belief which has never changed, and which therefore seems a problem beyond solution to those who do not belong to it. It is like eternity in its simplicity, for it is an indivisible unit. It is like it in its comprehensiveness, for it embraces peoples of every age, of every clime and color. You know I allude to the Catholic Church. But how is this? How is it that this old Faith, this old Church of two thousand years, seems to live and be as perfect as ever? How is it that the religion of Linus, Cletus, Clement and Sixtus, of Chrysostom and Basil and Gregory, of Constantine and

Theodosian and Pepin, which flourished since the first era of Christianity, seems still young in these days of progress? The Church lives to-day in the heart of her every child, while other denominations are disclaimed, even by their followers. She suffered nations to leave her, rather than change one iota of her doctrine. She allowed the Greeks to separate from her, rather than blot out even one word from her Creed. She saw England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and a great portion of Germany abandon her; she wept over their departure, she told them they were wrong, she prayed for their return, but she changed not a word. Neither threats nor promises could ever make her say that she was wrong.

We must seek for some other reason for this extraordinary fact, this religious phenomenon, and in answering it, we shall also answer the question proposed, *viz.*, "Is a man morally free to choose his form of religious belief?" Or, which may be plainer, Is a man obliged to choose one form of religious belief to the exclusion of all others? If he is, we have the solution to our difficulty; if not, it remains a mystery to human intelligence.

To explain my terms I must begin by saying that "Liberty" in general means an "immunity from every power, from every restraint." This power comes, or may come, from either of two sources: from within or from without. Arising from within, it is called *necessity*; and coming from without, it is termed *coaction* or *coercion*. For instance, we are not free to avoid thinking; it is a necessity of the human mind to think; but we are not under a necessity to think in any particular way; that is, we can select our thoughts. And not only can we do so, but we are obliged to square them with the eternal and divine law. We are obliged to abstain from wilfully thinking evil. At the same time, though we are bound so to direct our thoughts, we are free not to do so; we have the power to think evil, but if we do we must pay the penalty of the crime. This brings us to another species of Liberty which is called that of *contrariety*, and which is, in itself, an imperfection or an abuse of Liberty, and supposes a power to do evil.

When I say, Is a man free, I do not mean is he free

from necessity, because it is plain that he is. I do not mean is he free from coercion. It is plain that he is, also. But I mean, Is he obliged by any divine law to select or embrace a particular creed? And when I speak of religion, I mean, of course, Christianity or the Christian religion. And in this sense I say, "*Every one is bound to embrace the truth; to embrace that form of Christianity which contains it, wherever that may be, and to disclaim connection with any form of belief which is false, no matter at what cost.*"

Every one is bound to embrace truth. I cannot suppose that any one could disagree with or dispute this position; it is self-evident; for truth is the object of the human intellect. The human intellect necessarily seeks truth. It may be deceived about a particular object, but truth once found, it must embrace it. The only difficulty, then, I take it, can be, is there any specifically true code of Christianity to the exclusion of the rest? Or are all religions the same Christianity in substance, differing only in form? This is really the idea which prevails among many at present, and perhaps, even some lukewarm Catholics have caught it up, and think it is only because they were born and educated in the Catholic Church, that for this *alone* must they belong to it. But no person who holds such a doctrine with full knowledge can be a Catholic. He may pretend to be, but he is not; he has made shipwreck of his Faith.

Discussing the possible union of churches a few years ago, one of our leading newspapers commented on the proposed combining of the different schools or sects of Presbyterianism, and again, of another between the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Methodists. And, making the hypothesis of their compromise, the writer went a little farther than analogy would allow him, contemplating a similar union between the chiefs of Catholicity and Protestantism. "These gentlemen," he quaintly adds, "if they once more met on the same platform, would be very glad to shake hands in peace."

The chiefs of Catholicity, and the Chief of the chiefs of Catholicity, are always ready to shake hands in peace with any inoffensive respectable individual; but when the pos-

sibility is to be considered of "meeting on the same platform," if that of Faith is meant and a mutual compromise supposed, there is no possibility of such an occurrence. There are no people more desirous of union and unity than we Catholics are, but it must be such a one as means no change in our doctrines. Otherwise we cannot accept it.

In proposing such a union, in asking us to yield, or supposing that we *could* yield in such a matter, those who do so, and who accuse us of arrogance, of obstinacy, and of despotism, lose sight of a great principle; a principle which, if kept faithfully before their minds, would preserve them from many blunders. It is this: Christianity is not a human institution; it owes its origin to God; its constitution was formed by Him; and the body of its doctrines is a legacy which He bequeathes to it. It must partake of the nature of the divine mind from which it emanated, in which there is not a change nor shadow of vicissitude. St. James says: "Cursed is he who preaches a Gospel different from that which the Son of God gave to man." "Even should an angel announce to you (*per impossibile*) another Gospel, hear him not, let him be anathema," says St. Paul.

But these men overlook all this, or at least seem to do so. They place Christianity on the same footing as mere human science.

This cannot be. The principles on which scientific theories are based depend on man's knowledge, which is always, and must always be, limited. Now these principles vary in proportion to the advancement of research and the extent of knowledge; there are many things in nature of which we know little or nothing; we are not capable of explaining the nature of the little sand pebbles that lie scattered beneath our feet; we do not comprehend how a tiny seed contains a large beech tree.

Take, for instance, medical science, and read the articles contributed to its reviews by physicians, and you will find that, according as the mysteries of nature develop, medicine changes its theories; and he who is not acquainted with these is considered behind in his profession.

Take astronomy. You know that at one time, the sun, with all the heavenly bodies, was said to move around the

earth; but study and research have demonstrated the contrary, *viz.*, that the sun is stationary.

You know what a change Sir Isaac Newton and Kepler made in the world of physiology and astronomy. Why is this? Because these systems and theories, based on human knowledge, depended on human research, and as men dug deeper into the mine of knowledge, they exhumed some fossil or other which proved to them that their theories had been formed on a false basis. That their deductions were from premises which had no existence except in imagination; that their laws were not founded on facts; and therefore that their conclusions must vary according to the nature of the discovery. All these results are a credit to the human mind. But what are they, after all? They are simply becoming acquainted with laws, and obtaining a knowledge of facts which originated from the divine mind. Hence there should be greater reason to proclaim the glory of Him whose knowledge can never be increased, and a proof to us what pigmies we are when compared with Increased Intelligence.

But, perhaps, even in religion we shall experience the same result by patient waiting and examination. This could never be. Religion and natural laws belong to different orders. Religion appertains to man, to guide him to his last end. Natural laws regulate irrational and inanimate nature in their subserviency to man. Religion supposes that it is known because it imposes obligations on beings of intelligence and free will. Natural laws comprise those laws which are necessarily obeyed, and which it is not necessary for man to know. Religion is entirely supernatural and therefore cannot possibly be scrutinized by mere natural faculties. Other natural laws are entirely within the range of human reason.

This is an intrinsic reason why any amount of investigation cannot produce a change in religion. But let me ask, again, What is Christianity? Christianity is nothing more or less than that body of doctrine and code of Christian morals left by the Son of God to man. It is nothing else than professing the truths which He taught. If we differ from His Gospel, it is no longer His but our own, or some other. The truths which Jesus Christ revealed were

intended not alone for the men who lived when He was on earth. They were intended for mankind of every succeeding age to the end of time. They are as necessary for our salvation as they were for the salvation of those who heard them from His own sacred lips. Therefore we must have them as well as they, unchanged and pure, for any other supposition would suppose injustice on the part of God.

But I fancy some person would likely say here: "This seems very self-sufficient; it seems presumptuous to say Christianity is one body of doctrine, when we have only to cross a few streets at intervals to meet seven or eight congregations, even in this city, and every congregation says it has the doctrine of Christ." How is this answered?

One set of people answers, It is not necessary to have unity in doctrine, if we "do right."

Another Protestant friend will say: Well, some doctrine is necessary; but they (all the sects) are members of one family; they all teach some of the truths of Christianity, and say they are His followers.

A third says, Yes, this is true, but these doctrines on which the difference is, are not fundamental doctrines. Christianity under all forms is substantially the same.

Lastly, comes the Catholic, who says: Yes, all these claim to be Christian, if you will, but their claim is a false one. The Son of God, the Author of truth and the Source of harmony, never established two religions directly opposed to each other; nor created a disorder which has no existence in any other of His works. This, therefore, is the work of man, and not the religion of the Son of God. Now, let us examine these answers, dispassionately.

The first, if admitted, would entail the destruction of all positive law. For instance, it is enough for a man to *do right*. Now there is a great deal in these words. If this first specimen of modern Christianity means by *doing right*, living according to the divine law; believing with undoubting faith the truths which Jesus Christ taught, then the matter ends, for I agree with him. But is this what is meant by these words? By no means. Their meaning is, No matter what you believe, how much or how little, if you do what *you* yourself think to be *right*.

Now, you are well aware that you can always find people to imagine anything right, no matter how absurd. You know that the chief of the Mormons persuades his Saints that they are on the shortest road to heaven, though the rest of humanity can not be persuaded of it. There are the Christian Scientists, whose prominent doctrine is that if a man becomes ill, no matter how seriously, he must not call in a physician. You see what people can be brought to believe right if you read of the religion of the "Shakers," or the Oneida Brethren. Yet all these say they believe right. In fact, in a matter of religion, nothing seems too absurd for some to believe, except the truth.

But further. If this principle were admitted, it would destroy all external law. It would destroy all truth outside the mind. It would destroy all positive law, because their own consciences would be the law, instead of being the dictate of the law, the instrument by which the law is applied, and governs us. It would destroy all external truth, because people would have different notions as to what is right, and truth, in every such case, would be the offspring of man's ideas, instead of man's ideas being begotten of truth.

Again, Christianity, if it means anything in the minds of those people, must be a society, a body of people professing to follow the doctrines of Christ. Now, what is the very first idea of society? According to the etymology of the term, it signifies a number of people bound together by a moral tie or union, so as to constitute, as it were, a moral person, having certain laws whereby the acts of each are regulated in relation to the entire body. The term society includes in itself the idea of law; law is indispensable to its existence.

Take a familiar example; that of a Town Corporation; take that of a Literary Society; of a Benevolent Society; and ask one friend would he be admitted or considered as a member if he said, "I will do what I think right without any reference to the rules or laws." Ask him would he go unpunished if he did what he thought was right without observing the law of the State. Every court house in the city is to remind men that it is not by their own individual notions they are to be judged, but by the law to which they are

subject, and which exists, an external code, to guide them in their social relations, a protest against individual fancies. Why, to be short, if such a doctrine were admitted with its corollaries in our dealings with one another, society would not survive a year. You see, then, how illogical, how unreasonable, these people are; they reject this in every matter except in religion; and in that they are ready for any wrong idea.

I take it, therefore, that this first answer is not satisfactory; that it is false; and that to be a member of that society which our blessed Lord established, in other words, to be a Christian, a man must know the truths of Christianity, and regulate his actions by its laws.

But let us examine the second answer: The second gentleman says, "Well, Christians of every denomination teach some of the truths which He taught, though they may not all have the same belief on every point; and when they say they follow and profess Christ, they are members of the same family."

This answer, though I fear it has deluded and is deluding many, is of the same, is of as much weight, as the last. I might reply in the same way, and say, it is not enough to make you a citizen of the United States to say you hold and believe like it, that a republic is the best form of government. You must, besides this, swear allegiance to its Constitution; and the moment you give up this allegiance, you cease to be considered a citizen. The American and English laws are not the same, though they have both borrowed some items from (and teach some of) the old Roman law. To say that all religions are the same, or members of one, because they each have some of the truths of Christ, is a perfectly parallel case. It is like saying that men and brute animals are the same, because they have some qualities in common.

Hence it is not enough to profess some, we must profess all, without one exception, of the doctrines of Christ, in order to be members of His Church.

Besides, we ask our friend who answers in this way, "Will you give us a place in the family, and admit we are Christians? If you do, why do you hate us so much, why

do you fear us, why do your ministers falsely represent us, write against us, and preach against us?"

No, they do not think this.

If you do not give us this place (I did not say we would accept it) then you are convicted by your own words, for we not only hold some truths, but we hold *every truth* which you have, and other truths also which you refused to take from us, although you received every truth that you have at our hands.

The second answer, therefore, will not content us. But let us hear the third gentleman: Christianity, he says, is substantially the same under every denomination, and only differs in doctrines which are not fundamental.

This answer is very like the last, but is not entirely the same. The last said it was not necessary to profess all the truths. This gentleman says yes, provided they are *fundamental*, but there is no fundamental difference.

There are some people nowadays (non-Catholics) who flatter themselves (strange to say) that they are entirely of the same faith as we are, and that they only disagree with us in some doctrine of no consequence. I believe, however, that the generality of non-Catholics do not concur in this, and they are right; for no man in his senses could believe the Catholic Church the same as any phase of Protestantism, which was first started as a protest against Catholicity.

Outside the Catholic Church, among Protestants, it is very generally believed that the Protestant sects are the same substantially. We shall examine the truth of all this for a few minutes. I said that no man in his proper senses, if he was not ignorant, would say that Protestantism under any phase was or is the same as Catholicity. Let us take a High Church Protestant, or Ritualist, who tries to play the Catholic. Now, in the outset he can believe and think what he pleases. A Catholic cannot. He is bound to think and believe what the Church teaches him to be the doctrine of Christ, and nothing else, no matter, even, if he is the Sovereign Pontiff.

But he answers, perhaps: You mistake, I cannot do so, I must bow to authority. Well, then, I say, then you

are no Protestant, for, remember, a Protestant can have his own private views of religion. This is the cornerstone of Protestantism, really. As one of its Bishops in England defines Protestantism, it is, "To believe what you think and think what you please." Does not this look like it? But he says we have advanced—we believe in the necessity of authority. Then (I ask), where is it? Is this authority divine or human? If divine, it must be infallible. But he doesn't admit infallible authority. Therefore it must be human; but you are not bound to submit your own opinion to mere human authority unless as a matter of courtesy; and therefore he really can think as he pleases.

This is certainly not like being a Catholic. To be a child of the Catholic Church, it is necessary to believe every doctrine explicitly or implicitly. The very threshold of her Faith cannot be crossed except by a person in such disposition. No Catholic Priest, Bishop, or Pope could confer the first Sacrament, Baptism, admission to the Church, without this condition, for every doctrine or dogma enters into her very substance and life.

You see, therefore, how different it is. But some non-Catholic reflects or thinks—are they not very arbitrary? is this not despotism? Not so fast. You are told such a doctrine is to be held, and you hold it, though you have no authority for it. You are not sure it has come from God, because your neighbor's opinion is just as good as yours, and he says it has not. Nevertheless, you believe it. The Catholic Church, when asking us to believe her doctrines, assures us that she received them from God. Which submission is the more reasonable? Suppose an army were sent to the South to demand certain things of the Southern States. Would not these people say, why impose these demands? If so, the army would refer them to the Government, whose commands it was simply executing. And if any one not of the Faith says to the Church, How arbitrary, how severe, your demands are! she can only refer them to Him who charged her to "teach all things whatsoever He commanded" her. The reference is to be made to Him who instituted her, and charged her to teach all nations the truth that He gave her. Why, then, accuse her of prevarication, when

she *cannot* go aside? Why accuse her of despotism, when she says she is simply the guardian of the truth as she received it from God? Examine her claims to the office, if you will, but do not say that she is arbitrary or despotic until you are convinced that she is not the guardian she claims to be.

And if you find she is the guardian, bear in mind, then, that her words are the words of God, of which "neither jot nor tittle shall pass away," for they are fixed in the firmament of everlasting truth.

From all this it is pretty evident that Catholicity bears no similarity to that form of Protestantism called Ritualism. That has the voice of Jacob, though it assumes the garb of Esau.

We are all, I hope, convinced that Catholicity is not Protestantism, even in its mildest mood, and never can be. Outside the Catholic Church people usually think that all forms, at least of Protestantism, are the same, and that their difference is only accidental. Is this so? Well, we shall just catechize these gentlemen in turn.

The first we meet is an Episcopalian. We ask him: Sir, what do you think about Baptism? He answers, It is not quite certain, but for my own part (though my father, who is a parson, disagrees with me), I believe it is necessary to salvation.

The second is a Presbyterian, and he says: Oh, it is merely an ordinance!

The third is a Methodist. Well, this gentleman preaches in a sort of generalizing way, which cannot be understood. He says it is necessary to be converted.

The next is a Baptist, who pronounces: Certainly, Baptism is necessary to salvation.

The fifth gentleman is a Unitarian, but strange to say, though he is called a Christian, he does not admit a distinction of Persons in God at all, and hence it would be vain to question him.

The sixth is a Universalist. He says there is no punishment for the sinner hereafter, and therefore arranges the matter simply.

All admit, even the blasphemers admit, that Jesus Christ

taught the truth. And when He preached the Gospel He did not speak with a faltering voice. He did not teach truth at one time and deny it at another. We know that, even when His followers said that His doctrine was hard, He did not change it, but allowed them to go their way when they refused to believe, though He raised the dead to life in proof of His word.

Now, let us apply this truth that Baptism is necessary for salvation. He taught it was, or He taught it was not. The two cannot be true at the same time, for they are contradictory. If He taught it, we can have no second opinion about it. Any one that holds the contrary must accuse the Son of God of a lie. If He taught it was not, then, also, those who say it is must be wrong. Behold, then, the differences between all these. Are not these fundamentals? Is not that doctrine fundamental, which, if we do not hold, we lose our souls forever? Is not that doctrine fundamental, which, if it is not true, makes idolaters of those who believe it? And if it is true, makes revilers and blasphemers of those who deny it, for they rob the Son of God of His divinity, and reduce Him to the level of a mere human being. Away with such absurd subterfuges! Away with such an opinion as that these differences are not fundamental!

But some one may say, perhaps, they (sectaries) do not so differ. Well, then, I only refer him to themselves. In any congregation you can hardly find two agreeing on any two doctrines. Even in one family, and when the father and son are both preachers of the same school, they hold opposite opinions.

And now, having heard the answers from these gentlemen, we return and repeat our proposition. Christianity must be one, indivisibly one, and identical with the doctrine of Him who taught it, otherwise it would not be His.

But now we seem in a labyrinth. On one hand, we have seen that we are obliged to embrace the truth wherever we find it. On the other hand, we have many denominations around us, and every one extending his hand to receive us. To which shall we go? All those we have asked have said, it is all the same, but we have seen it is not all the same, that they are each essentially different from the rest. What, then,

shall we do? But wait; you know the Catholic is generally put last, if people can put him there. Hence we very easily passed him by. Now, shall we ask his advice? He answers immediately, without any diffidence. I believe, he says, that Jesus Christ our Lord, the Son of God, founded one Faith, and one only. I believe the Faith, the truths which He taught, were indeed for all, because all are equal in His sight, and that any society not professing every truth He taught is not His, but was established by man. These gentlemen, he adds, whom you have just questioned, say we are all the same, but you have seen we are not. One must be right and all the rest wrong. I leave you to say which one that is, and I shall be glad to explain all my doctrines.

This answer will settle our difficulty, if we can find out the right form among all. But, you say, what about those not belonging to that body? Well, my answer is, Let themselves answer for it. For in giving us a means to know the truth He has given us all we need, and if the truth is in our midst and we shut our eyes to it, we ourselves are then responsible. When the sun sheds his beams it is our own fault if we do not admit them.

But I am asked, How am I, amid so many claims to the truth, to know the true one? In answer to this, I lay down two first principles, which if applied must surely lead us to it.

The first principle is: God is just, essentially, and hence, must have given sufficient means whereby we can distinguish from a counterfeit that religion which He established to save us and lead us to Him. This principle is evident, because otherwise God would not be just.

The means or marks by which His truths are to be distinguished must come under the influence of the senses. This is also evident, for as the Christian society which Our Lord founded is composed of men, we must get a knowledge of it through our senses, the only way knowledge is conveyed, unless by revelation. We must have certain signs which are an evidence of its truth, and which prevent any rational individual from confounding it with any other.

Now, what are these signs or marks? They are chiefly four. It must be One, Holy, Universal, or Catholic, and it

must come from the Apostles. These four marks of the truth of God are so intimately connected that where one is all four must necessarily be. The absence of one is an evidence of the absence of all. The Christian Church being the work of God, it must reflect the undivided unity of the Godhead. God could not be the Author of unity and disorder, for everything in Him and His works is ineffable harmony. It must be holy, pre-eminently holy; it must bear the impress of that inviolable sanctity in the presence of which the angels veil their faces. He could not be the Author of any other works. It must be Catholic or Universal, for it was intended to be the instrument of salvation for all mankind, in all ages. It must come from Christ, and the Apostles, in an unbroken line, otherwise it is not identical with the Christianity which our blessed Lord had founded. And now I would consider the subject very incomplete if I did not for a few moments inquire where these signs of God's Church are visible.

Are they visible among non-Catholics? Have they Unity? But we have already seen they are not, and cannot be one; that body one, where no one has a Creed; that body one, where not only the different bodies are divided, but where even the members of the same family, sometimes of the preacher's family, will not hold the same Creed; that body one, where there is no authority, no central bond which is essential to unity; that body one, where no one knows even the doctrines necessary to salvation! No. Even they themselves are beginning to acknowledge this glaring fact.

Have they Sanctity? I do not speak of individuals; I speak of societies. Where, I ask, are their works of heroic virtue, their pre-eminent sanctity? They may be very good, inoffensive citizens, of amiable life, but where shall we find those virtues which the Son of God counseled, though He did not command? Then there is no place for those who wish to despise the pleasures of sense, and give themselves to contemplation and to prayer. There is no place for the practice of poverty when they are pre-eminently for the rich and the wealthy. There is no place for obedience when every one is teacher, and where they despise mortification.

Have they the sign of Universality? Ah, yes, indeed,

Protestantism is everywhere, but it is not the same in any one place, and hence it is not universal; to be so it should be identical; it should be universal in its relation to time; but every one knows how long it exists.

Are they Apostolic? How can they have come from the Apostles when they were not known until a few centuries ago?

And now let us turn to the Catholic Church. Is it one? Does it hold one body of doctrines? But I have already said we are accused of never changing. Yes, all, from the Pontiff to the most illiterate member, must believe and hold all that the Church teaches, else neither could be a Catholic. I would invite our Protestant friend to visit every country of the known world. Begin here in this hemisphere, and travel from north to south, from the shores of Greenland along the Rocky Mountains, to where the chain of the Andes runs out into Cape Horn. Cross the Atlantic, and make a similar tour from Siberia throughout Asia; across the Ural Mountains and through Europe; throughout the vast extent of Africa from Egypt to the Cape of Good Hope, and taking Oceanica and its neighboring islands on his way home. Tell me, I would ask him, have you not heard all Catholics speak the same language of Faith; tell me, did they not all believe the same truths? Had they not the same Sacraments and the same Sacrifice, and did they not kneel before the same altar and the same God, no matter how distinct the nationality? This, then, is unity, else unity is only a name. Yes, the Catholic Church is one, one in Faith, one in communion with one Authority, one kingdom ruled by one Sovereign, one society with the same laws and truths, governed by one President, one flock cared for by one Shepherd, one Head and Father of all, the Visible Head on earth, the Vicar of Christ.

But it must be Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, if *one*. Is it so? Remember, I do not mean its individual members, for some are, sad to say, a reproach to their name, and a stumbling-block to others, but I mean as a Christian community, has it the mark of pre-eminent sanctity? You must be aware that the virtues which are voluntarily practiced in the Catholic Church are sometimes considered impossible by those

outside, and they do not believe. Shall I reckon up its myriads of saints, its martyrs, its confessors, its virgins, little less than the angels surrounding the throne of God?

Is she Apostolic? We point to her unbroken line of Sovereign Pontiffs, and to her testimony of twenty centuries. And further, believing and knowing that we Catholics only possess the truth, what less can I do than endeavor by every reasonable means to make it known to all; for it was intended for all, if they do not oppose it.

To the children of the Catholic Church who have listened to these words, what shall I say? Be grateful to God for your Faith. "It is the victory that overcometh the world." Prove your gratitude by your good works. Remember that the first wrong step of every castaway was pride and disobedience. Be humble and obedient, like to Him who said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart," and who was "obedient unto death."

Be faithful in your adherence to the See of Peter, not only outwardly, but in your hearts. From that See alone, the corner-stone of the Church, next to Jesus Christ, can you hear the words of truth which are unknown to the rest of the world.

Some of the last words St. Patrick is said to have left to his spiritual children were, "As you are children of Christ, so be you also children of Rome." This will always be the test of true faith; that Faith without which it is impossible to be saved.

THE CATHOLIC PRIEST. WHO IS HE? WHAT IS HIS OFFICE?

IT MAY seem strange to some that a Catholic priest should come before an audience in a public hall to discuss, or rather, treat a subject such as that to which I am going to address myself. But if you reflect for a moment or two, you shall find that there is some reason.

In the first place, then, though the existence of the Catholic priest cannot be denied; though he lives, and goes among the community like other men; and though, speaking generally, he attracts to himself a very fair share of the attention and criticism of his fellow-men, yet, for all that, there are few if any who are less understood outside the Catholic portion of the community. As a minister of religion he is usually considered an intruder, and his office, though for the most part unknown, is derided and enchained as far as possible. As a citizen, he is very often looked on with suspicion; some going so far as to say that inasmuch as he is pledged to obey his ecclesiastical superiors in all matters that belong to their jurisdiction and are bounded by the line of his office as a priest, therefore he cannot be trusted as a loyal citizen.

In the second place, the Catholic priest, if he is true to his calling, ought to represent the Church, wherever he is, and you may be aware that in this century and during these days, when men boast of freedom from tyranny, that Church is denied organic existence in some countries, while here in our own glorious land there are men so lost to truth, so forgetful of the past, and so blind to the events of the future, as to openly discuss whether or not the progress of the Catholic Faith should excite alarm.

Now, all these things considered, there is, I fancy, some reason, some justification for a Catholic priest, if, when the

occasion offers, he should take advantage of it to endeavor to defend himself, and to show in his "*apologia pro vita*" that he ought not to be so considered, as he is not an intruder; that he is not the friend of disorder, nor the advocate of tyranny, but, on the contrary, the sworn enemy of both; that he conspires, not to the destruction of human happiness, but rather expends his energies, always supposing him faithful to his calling, in advancing and increasing the sum of real happiness, by leading to where it is, and aiding in the struggle to attain it. That the religion to which he belongs is not that which is represented by those hostile to it, one of slavery and despotism; but rather the one of all others which insures and preserves true freedom evermore. It is therefore quite fitting that the priest himself, who should know most of his office, should become the advocate of his own cause.

But let us come to the subject. The Catholic priest, who is he? Strange question, at this date of the Christian era, for he has been a living witness of Christianity since its origin. What page of Christian history can we open on which his name is not written in the most marked characters? What era or generation has ever passed by in which his influence has not been felt? What period of time has elapsed since the Redeemer, when he was unknown or forgotten?

What country on the broad surface of the globe in whose history he has not borne a part, and even a conspicuous part? "*Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?*" Surely he was known in the last four centuries, as every tyro in history knows. He was known in the Middle, or, as they are called, the "Dark Ages," for they have received that name, though unjustly, because of their transcendent influence.

In those days he was the only teacher, and faithfully did he discharge the office. To him is due the preservation of letters during the terrible onslaught of the barbarians upon all Europe. Going back through the records of Christianity, we find that the most conspicuous writers were not only apologists for the Christian priesthood, but even priests themselves. Thus, for instance, have we Bernard, Thomas

Aquinas, the Gregorys, the Leos, the Basils, the Cyrils, the Cyprians, Jeromes, Chrysostoms and Augustines, and within shadow of the Apostles, we have Tertullian, Origen, Justin (Martyr), etc., all of whom were priests of the Catholic Church. In one word, the history of the Christian family, during its existence, is the history of the Catholic priest in his relation to Christian society. The Catholic priest, therefore, is no new person in the Christian family; he has always been not only an integral, but an essential element of its constituents; for he is, and always has been, a fact; and as facts are stubborn things, so is the Catholic priest a stubborn thing. You may exile him, but he returns; you may torture him, you may even put him to death, but for every one who dies two will arise as from the dead, to take his place. Princes, kings, and potentates of every class and power have conspired against and turned all their might to destroy him, but after having subjected him to untold sufferings, they have been obliged to make peace with him again.

Strange individual! Who is he? Before answering this question, I fancy it is only proper to say something of priesthood in general. And in speaking of it, I think I can give no better idea of it than that which the Apostle gives in his Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter v.

Priesthood in general is "that office in the human family which has for its function to mediate between man and the Deity." The priesthood, or the office of the priest, has at all times in the history of the human race been considered not only necessary, but even essential to the very idea and name of religion. If we inquire among the pagan nations, we shall find that not only was the priest held in the highest honor, but sometimes, as for instance, among the Egyptians, no one was allowed to assume the scepter of the king unless at the same time he should be invested with the dignity of the priest. So Plato tells us. So also do we learn of Numa Pompilius, the first King of the Romans, that he was a priest. Zenophon tells us also that, generally speaking, the Lacedonian kings were priests. We have also evidence in Holy Scripture that even among the Gentile people, who adored the true God, the office of priest and king were some-

times held by one and the same person. For instance, Melchisedech, who was at the same time King of Salem and Priest of the Most High. Cæsar tells us of the honor in which the priests were held in Gaul. Tacitus tells us in like manner, of Germany. Eusebius writes in the same way of the Persians. And Cicero extols the high honor which was paid to the Oracles or the Auguries. Plutarch, also, assures us that it was unlawful for a Roman judge to compel the priests to take an oath, that their word was to have the self-same weight as the sworn testimony of laymen.

And turning to the Mosaic Law, it is almost unnecessary to say what a large share the priestly office had in the worship of the Jews, as commanded by God Himself. Moses was commanded to designate to that office only Aaron and his children. And further on, the tribe of Levi were to be numbered not with the sons of Israel, but by themselves, as they were to hold the ministry of the Tabernacle. They were to have no certain share in the Land of Promise, but were to receive from all the people tithes of their possessions. In other words, they received according to the command of God, a tribute, as though princes. And so we learn, as St. Cyril of Alexandria remarks, that they were placed equal in honor and dignity to princes. Therefore was Josue, who was leader of the people after Moses, commanded to present himself before the Priest Eleazar, if anything of importance were to be undertaken, in order that Eleazar should consult the Lord.

But why introduce the priesthood of paganism, the priesthood of the Gentile and Mosaic peoples? What conclusion is derived from all that has been said with regard to the priesthood of ancient days? It follows at least that every religion which has ever appeared in the world, whether true or false, had a priest, and recognized his office. If Christianity had none, it would be the first of the kind, and if it claimed to have a priest, a priesthood and a Sacrifice, it, at least, claims nothing foreign to the idea or notion of religion, but on the contrary, something which enters into its very essence.

But what is the priestly office in the Catholic sense? Before entering on this portion of the subject, I must ob-

serve that I am not here as a controversialist, nor do I desire to say anything to offend the sensibilities of any one. I am here simply and solely as an apologist, however undeserving, of the title; I am here to state the end, the object and the nature of the office of the Catholic priest, in the mind of the Catholic Church.

In order to understand this properly, it will be necessary to have a correct idea of the doctrine of the Catholic Church, with regard to the economy or plan of the redemption of the human race.

The Catholic Church teaches that God, the Son, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, took flesh in the womb of a virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and that He was thus made man, and was born of her. Moreover, that this same Man-God and God-Man, who is Christ the Lord, lived upon earth for thirty years and more, and during the last three years of His life preached a Gospel full of wisdom and truth, which was to be perpetual; exemplified it in His own divine life, and having done so, endured bitter sufferings, and finally died a most cruel death. She tells us that it was by this Passion and death that the price of man's Redemption was paid.

So far, I believe, all who call themselves Christians agree. But we know that in the act of redemption the will of man was left untouched. In other words, man may or may not, as he chooses, make use of the merits of Christ. Hence there must be some means of application of these merits, some conditions to be fulfilled, some work done, through which and in order that they may benefit us.

What are those means? What are those conditions? The Catholic Church immediately answers, The merits of Christ must be applied to the souls of men through the agency of His Christian priesthood.

In explaining this, she says that the Redeemer, in establishing His Church, which was to be perpetual, and which Church she claims to be, established within her also a perpetual priesthood, that is to say, that He raised the Apostles to share in His priesthood, and gave them power to perpetuate their office, in virtue of their ordination. That He gave them, moreover, a two-fold commission to mankind, the

first of which was to teach all truth at all times to all nations; the second, to preserve the heart and morals of mankind from corruption.

To discharge the first part of their office, it was necessary that they should teach without doubt or danger of error, and therefore more than mere human knowledge being requisite, He promised His perpetual assistance, and that He, directing and assisting them by His perpetual assistance, they should always proclaim the truth to the world. To perform the second portion of their office faithfully, it was necessary that they should receive assistance also. And therefore He gave a special grace, through their ordination, whereby, by their cooperation, they would be enabled to discharge their duties with courage and fidelity, despite the machinations and opposition devised against them. To this second portion of the apostolic and priestly office belong the administration of the Sacraments, instituted for the sanctification and salvation of mankind, and the offering of the Sacrifice of the New Law.

With regard to the Sacraments, the Church explains that they correspond to the different wants and states of human life. Baptism, for instance, engrafts us on the Church, and constitutes us members of the mystic body of the Lord. Confirmation strengthens us to profess our faith. Penance affords us an opportunity and a means of removing sin, if we have the misfortune to fall into it. The Eucharist strengthens us in the life of grace. And so with all the others; each has its own special time and grace. And all are to be received through the agency of the priesthood. Moreover, the Catholic Church teaches that as sacrifice is of the essence of religion, Christ did not abolish it, but by giving us a Victim of unspeakable value, perfected it, so that in the sacrifice of the Christian priesthood all other sacrifices have been prefigured and are typically contained. St. Augustine says that God never destroys anything, but either changes it into something else, or perfects it. So, instead of abolishing sacrifice, by giving us a perfect and undefilable Victim, He perfected the first and most necessary act of homage to God. To sum up: the office of the Catholic priest is, therefore, two-fold: 1st, to enlighten the world, *i.e.*, mankind, with the light and

truth of divine Faith, and, consequently, to save them from the darkness of error. And to this end Our Lord said, "You are the light of the world." 2d, To purify the heart of man, and preserve it from corruption, by the application of the merits of Christ, through the exercise of the priestly ministry. And to this end Our Lord said to the Apostles, "You are the salt of the earth."

What follows from this? It follows, in the first place that his office is spiritual, that he must penetrate every region of the globe. Hence the Catholic Church has never ceased to send forth its missionaries. You find the priest everywhere. He is always among the pioneers of a nation; one of the first, or, perhaps, the first man that stepped on the shores of America was a Franciscan friar.

In the second place, it follows that because he is charged to speak the truth, he cannot, without being unfaithful to his office, make a compromise with error, at the risk of liberty or life itself. And here is the key to the uncompromising attitude he holds whenever men trespass within the domain of religion in their relation to him. It follows, in the third place, that the voice of the priestly office must never be silent when it is necessary to speak. Hence we hear so many warnings from the Chief Bishop of the Catholic Church.

He speaks aloud to every nation. Though he is called impertinent, a fanatic, a despot, nevertheless, he speaks, and no voice has such effect; because if his words are not heard with deference, they are heard with detestation. It follows, moreover, that this cannot be properly called intolerance or bigotry, since it is a duty divinely imposed.

With regard to the second part of his commission: That through the agency of his ministry the morals of mankind are to be preserved, or cleansed, if corrupt.

From this it immediately follows that he must be ready when necessary to exercise his ministry, and that he must do so at all times, in all seasons, in every danger. And here we have the key to the strange life of the Catholic priest.

We meet him on every occasion: in peace, and in war; in sickness, during pestilence, and at the hour of death, at night, by day; in the storm, in the calm; in the heat and sunshine of summer, or in the depth of the frost of winter;

in prosperity and adversity; whether he is called by the rich, or the nobleman, or the peasant, the learned or the illiterate, it must be the same to him. No danger is great enough to deter him, no peril too much for him to brave, when his presence is sought in the hour of need for the office of his ministry.

And, let me ask, can any more cogent proof be given of his consciousness of responsibility, of his firm conviction that he is not a mere human agent, but an agent in a divine work? And let me ask, again, when was the Catholic priest unfaithful to his office? What time, or in what place in the history of the world, did the Catholic priest desert his post? Never, I repeat it, never, as a representative of the Church. The ravages of the yellow fever or the cholera or the small-pox or any other noxious or deadly disease never had any terror for him. When stout hearts and brave men quailed and fled, he was always found by the dying bed of the wretched and miserable, cheering them with the last ray of hope for a happy eternity.

Here, truly, if there is such on earth at all, is a life of self-denial, sacrifice, and heroism. And for what? What compensation can be offered for all that he endures interiorly from a sense of his responsibility, unknown to any other but himself? What compensation for having sacrificed the legitimate joys of domestic life, that he may literally spend himself for the people? What compensation for the perpetual sacrifice of his life, which he is virtually making? I say emphatically there is no compensation in this world anything commensurate with the sacrifice of the priest. And therefore, in order that he should faithfully discharge his fearful duties, his motives must be founded on the hope of a future reward, and on that alone.

And here let me ask, what is there, in such an office as this, for a nation to fear? Does the freedom to make such sacrifices as these, to offer one's life for the welfare and happiness of the people, forebode evil to a nation? Away with the thought! Perish the idea! Only when the foundations are laid in corruption, and its hopes built on the absence of virtue, can a nation fear the office of the priest. But as long as bravery and heroism and the highest form

of justice are respected and loved by them, so long will the influence of the Catholic priest, and the exercise of his ministry, be among the most potent guards, and the safest pledges of that people's existence as a nation. A few remarks more, and I have done. I will be asked perhaps: How do I explain the appearance and spread of doctrines different from those of the Catholic Church in the Christian world? How explain the corruption of morals, even in those countries where the Catholic religion is recognized as that of the state?

In answering these questions, I must remind you of what I have already said, *viz.*, that in the act of the Redemption, the will of man was left untouched. That is to say, he might accept or reject, as he chose, the truths of Faith; and, having accepted them, he might, if he chose, neglect, or even refuse, to put those truths in practice. I will remind you that man is of an animal as well as of a spiritual nature; that the law of God and the doctrine of Christianity suppose a continual and constant combat between the higher nature of man, that is, his soul, and animal nature.

Moreover, while this is the case, the natural propensities of man are to evil and the satisfaction of the animal instincts; and consequently, the struggle is severe, and unless he is aided by divine grace and co-operates with it, he will yield.

Among the chief of these propensities are, Pride, Ambition, Envy, and the sins of the intellect in general. There are others of the heart, such as Avarice, Gluttony, Sloth, Lust.

Examine carefully, then, the circumstances of the introduction of any doctrine which the Church has condemned as false, and you shall find, as the latent and chief, if not the only reason and motive, of that introduction, some one or more of those animal passions to which human nature is heir. And if you find a people which professes to be Catholic, and at the same time are manifestly corrupt in morals, you may immediately conclude that that people do not make use of the ministry of the priesthood; that they absent themselves from the Sacraments, which are the channels of the spiritual life of grace, virtue, and purity of morals.

Lastly, point out a country or a people among whom the priests have been faithful to their office, and who, in turn, make use of the willing ministry of the priesthood, and I shall tell you that among that people there was never a religious error, that there never was a false doctrine among them, and their morals were the admiration and the wonder of men, and the theme of universal commendation. One such country occurs to my mind at present—oppressed and persecuted Ireland. You may say, what is her reward? I answer, very little, here below, as far as we can see, but we know from the lips of Wisdom that “God chastiseth those whom He loves.” That gold is tried in the furnace, and virtue is proved in tribulation and perfected in weakness.

And we know, moreover, that the day will come when the veil will be removed from our eyes, and we shall see the true meaning of these mysterious dealings of Providence with men. On that day the Eternal and Just God, before whom all are equal, will justify the judgments given, and conquer, when He shall have judged in sight of all men. On that day also, love of Christian truth and reverence and attachment for the Christian priesthood will constitute the brightest gem in the crown of a faithful people.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

THIS doctrine of the Catholic Church—the Eucharist—is the highest, the holiest, and the most divine in its conception and object; the most awful in its nature and reality; and, at the same time, the most attractive and consoling in its effects. What is the Eucharist? It is the Sacrament of the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, really present under the appearance of bread and wine.

Let us explain this definition. 1st, It is a Sacrament; that is to say, it is one of those seven external rites which Christ instituted for the purpose of communicating to man the grace which He purchased for them by the shedding of His blood.

2d, In this Sacrament, Jesus Christ is *really, truly*, and *substantially* present, His very flesh and blood, with His soul and divinity. Not in figure, nor merely by Faith, but in very deed, personally, though sacramentally.

3d, The Catholic Church teaches that that which was once bread is no longer bread; but that, in virtue of the words which Christ used at the Last Supper, and in virtue of the power which He gave them, the substance of bread has become the substance of the body of Christ, and the substance of wine has been changed into His blood.

4th, All that remains of the bread and wine after the consecration is the appearance, that is to say, the taste, color, and form of bread and wine, which are called the accidents.

5th, The Catholic Church teaches that Christ instituted the Eucharist, not only as a Sacrament for the purpose of spiritually feeding and nourishing the soul; but that He also instituted it as a sacrifice, to be the one and only real Sacrifice of the New Law, to worship God and benefit man. Now, then, having clearly before our minds the doctrine

of the Catholic Church, we will readily admit that, if that doctrine is true, it is certainly the highest, and holiest, and most divine in its conception and object. For what object, indeed, is greater or more holy than God?

You will admit that it is the most awful in its nature. Think, indeed, of God placing Himself in the hands of man, and nourishing man with His sacred flesh and blood! You will admit that if that doctrine is true, there could be no doctrine which could possibly be more consoling to man than this, which brings God into such close and intimate union with him in this life of sorrow and tears.

Again, if this doctrine is true (and in the mind, and according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, it is), you have in it a complete and perfect answer as to why we build our churches so elaborate in design, in the artistic perfection of the structure itself; in the beauty and excellence of every portion of the edifice, and of every detail which contributes to make it one and harmonious, and to render it, as far as man can do so, a dwelling-place for God Himself. You have here a reason for our perfect arches, for our chaste columns, for the splendor of our decorations with their gold and silver, and the harmony and variety of their hues.

It will not be necessary to say why we have this altar, rich, massive, and perfect as a work of art, beautiful in every line, and in the rare marble of which it is formed. Nor should it be necessary to say why we do all in our power to make our ceremonies so full of pomp and devotional majesty as we can afford; why our vestments are rich, and often gorgeous; why we fill the surrounding atmosphere with the perfume of the incense which we offer before the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Every one of these questions is more than answered satisfactorily when we say that our Faith tells us, the doctrine of the Catholic Church teaches us, on the authority of God Himself, that here on this altar, Christ Jesus, Our Lord, true God and true man, is mystically slain and offered to His Eternal Father every time that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is perfected upon it; that here in this Tabernacle, Christ, the Lord, who was born in a stable, and walked the earth in a human body, and con-

soled men with His divine words and wisdom, and astonished the earth with the wonder of His works, that this very same Christ, God and man, is here, not in figure or merely by faith, but really, truly and substantially.

Truly, if this is true, nothing that we can do can be too much. If the patriarch Tobias thought half of his possessions not too much to offer the Angel Raphael for a comparatively slight service to him and his family; if King Assuerus offered Esther, and even Herod offered the daughter of Herodias, half of their kingdoms, for almost nothing; what should we content ourselves with offering to the Eternal God, who has come among us, and dwells with us here for evermore?

No doubt your answer will be, "I concede everything you say, but on what grounds does the Catholic Church claim to teach so astonishing a doctrine?"

In other words, let the Catholic Church stand forth here, and produce her evidence that Christ the Lord, the Redeemer of mankind, ever commissioned her and charged her to teach this astonishing doctrine. She comes forth without fear, without one moment's hesitation, exceedingly desirous to give evidence as to the truth of her claim.

She has various answers. Her first answer is, that which she invariably gives, *viz.*, She was sent among men with divine authority, to teach all the revelations of God which He made known to man, in the person of His divine Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord; and for that purpose she received all the necessary prerogatives to enable her to teach men forever without doubt or danger of error, everything which Christ taught, and charged her to teach.

This doctrine of the Eucharist is one of those precious and consoling truths which our divine Saviour committed to her.

If you have found valid her claim to a mission from Christ, why question her doctrine? If you say this is a mysterious doctrine, you must not forget that every step in the path of life is surrounded by mystery for the Christian. The Christian religion is necessarily a religion of mystery, because it is the fulness of the revelation of divine truths

and facts; and these it would be the apex of folly to claim to be able to understand.

Therefore, to be a mystery, provided only that it is of the deposit of Faith and shown to be taught by God, should be the highest test and evidence of its divine origin; for God is mystery, and incomprehensible.

Therefore, if you reject one mystery because it is beyond your comprehension, then in the name of wisdom, be consistent, and reject all. If you do not question the truth that there are three Persons in one God, really distinct and equal in all things; if you admit and receive with reverence, that God the Son, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, was conceived and made man in the womb of a Virgin and was born of her in a stable, and walked the earth in human form; to what degree of mystery can you not possibly ascend, and be consistent and intelligent? Therefore, found your examination of all such questions on the question of fact whether Christ taught it or not.

We shall now proceed to the examination of that fact. With what testimony shall we be satisfied? Surely, if we are honest in our inquiry and fair to ourselves, it should be enough to satisfy us if we find:

1st. That, having regard to the economy of God, this is what we would be led to expect from Him, in the New Dispensation.

2d. That if Christ, the Redeemer, had not left us this divine and mysterious Sacrament and Sacrifice, we should be worse off than the Jewish people. The Christian religion would be imperfect. The very *essence* of religion would be wanting to it.

3d. That, consequently, Christ did really and truly institute the Eucharist a Sacrifice and a Sacrament.

(a) All history says so.

(b) The liturgy and practice of Christianity say so.

(c) The impossibility of having any one else institute such a mystery and introduce it among men, says so.

(d) Lastly, the Word of God in the Sacred Scripture distinctly and emphatically says so.

Such are the sources of the evidence to be adduced.

1st, then, as to the economy of God: There is no Chris-

tian, no one, in fact, who believes in God at all, who will question the truth of the proposition that union with God constitutes the perfection of man in this life as well as the next. Union by grace and desire here, union of glory hereafter in heaven. This being so, it was necessary that the Christian religion should provide for the highest form of personal union with God that could possibly be conceived. Now this sacramental union, by which Christ, the great God of heaven and earth, vouchsafed to become our food, to take upon Him the very appearances of it, that in that way and after that manner He might enter into us and become one with us, elevating us, and placing us on the level of His own sacred person, strengthening us with the strength of His own divine nature, and enabling us to overcome the obstacles which life offers to our perseverance in His friendship, is that perfection desired.

2d. If Jesus Christ had not left us this precious gift, our state would not be in advance of the Jewish people, who had God with them constantly and in some visible manner. They were fed at His hands with manna which fell from heaven, and gave them abundant proof of His abiding care over them. They had the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to convince them that the divine protection was never absent. They were nourished frequently with refreshing waters which miraculously sprung from the earth at His command. They had the Ark of the Covenant, and the Loaves of Proposition, and the Holy of Holies, and the Tables of the Law, and the uninterrupted presence of God abiding with them, and making Himself visible in some tangible though mysterious manner.

And now that the New Law, the more glorious and perfect Covenant, the fulfilment of the prophecies, the realization of all that was simply figurative has come among us, through the advent of Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, are we nevertheless to expect that, instead of enjoying more nearly and more perfectly the divine presence, He is to leave us orphans, contrary to His promise? And having once died for us, and returned to His Father, He is to take away His blessed presence to the end of time?

Surely this is not in harmony with the designs of God

and the character of Jesus Christ. Impossible! Whoever has studied the economy and designs of God toward man, will immediately see that this course is not and cannot be according to them.

Again. In this supposition the Christian religion would be imperfect.

The very essence of religion, as an act of public worship, consists in the public acknowledgment of God being the Author of life and death. Now this act of acknowledgment is expressed only by sacrifice, and by sacrifice in which the victim, having been offered in a state of real or mystic death, is entirely consumed.

Hence, sacrifice is essential to every form of religion, even to the very notion of it. Hence it is found among every people in the world, even the savage tribes, from the very beginning. The Greeks and Romans, the Egyptians, the ancient Gauls and Norsemen, all had sacrifice offered; showing that though the object was false, yet the instinct of supreme worship by sacrifice was there. Now, God never destroys such instincts, but corrects and rectifies them, and perfects them.

Hence when Christ instituted His religion to be the means of salvation for man, He supplied it with everything that was necessary in a most perfect way. Instead of destroying sacrifice, He instituted the most perfect, the most exalted, the most acceptable to God that had ever been known. He instituted for a sacrifice in the Christian Dispensation the Sacrifice of Himself, to be renewed constantly, and, like the Sacraments, to apply to the human soul the merits which He obtained by His Passion and death on the cross.

This is the Sacrifice which the Catholic Church has had for two thousand years upon her altars. This is the Sacrifice of which the prophet spoke when he foretold the Sacrifice that could not be defiled by the unworthiness of the priest. This is the Sacrifice that strengthened and consoled the early Christians in their sufferings. This is the Sacrifice and the Sacrament which St. Paul calls "the Chalice of benediction, and the Communication of the Body of Christ." This is the mysterious pledge of Christ's love, of which Justin and Cyprian and Augustine and Irenæus and Polycarp, and all

the writers of the apostolic age and down through the centuries, speak in such unmistakable terms.

This supplies us with a reason for our old cathedrals and minsters in England and Germany and Italy and France, and all over Europe, buildings which represented the wealth of those nations lavished on them. There could be no possible meaning for them otherwise.

Like all the other Sacraments, and like the Church herself, unless Christ is the Author, there is no possibility of accounting for its existence in the world at all. We should be compelled to admit that history and mankind, in fact, conspired in the most wholesale imposture, without a trace of it on record.

Lastly, the Sacred Scripture, clearly and emphatically, gives evidence of, first, the promise, and secondly, the institution and fulfilment of that promise of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and Sacrament, for the Sacrifice of the Mass, like the Sacraments, derives all its efficacy from the Sacrifice of the Cross, which it renews, though without the real shedding of blood.

In the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, it is recorded that Our Lord, after having multiplied the loaves and fishes, was followed by a great many people across the Sea of Galilee, to the Synagogue at Capharnaum, and there, taking advantage of the miracle of the day before, instructed His hearers on the nature of the gift which the future had in store for them.

“I am the Bread of life . . . I am the living Bread which came down from heaven . . . And the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world . . . He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him.”

Now, from these passages it is plain as words can make it that Christ promised to institute, as a Sacrament, His body and blood. There is nothing whatsoever to lead to any other conclusion. His hearers murmured, and asked how that could be, and Christ, instead of correcting them, absolutely confirmed their understanding of His words by simply repeating them. The result was that many went back, and walked no more with Him.

Now then, compare these with the words in which St. Luke records His act at the Last Supper; and with the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians (x. 14-21; xi. 23-25): "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said, Take ye and eat; this is My body, which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of Me. In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying, This chalice is the new testament in My blood; this do ye as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of Me."

Christ could not have possibly used plainer words if He meant to give this wonderful Gift. Consequently, there can be no difficulty in the way, except that His omnipotence was limited, and that He was unable to give it. But no one will say that. No one will say that He, who, though the great God of heaven and earth, clothed and concealed even His divinity and His immensity in the humble garb of an infant babe, could not, if He so willed, do less, and so conceal once more His humanity and His divinity with the still humbler garb of the Sacramental Species.

Yes, great God, Thou didst at his creation place in the soul of man Thy own image. Thou didst in Thy death buy back the whole race, and here Thou dost crown all by giving Thyself to be the spiritual food of every individual, that thus Thou mayest exalt and perfect and make worthy of a glorious resurrection and fit for heaven, not only our souls, but even our poor, mortal bodies.

"Whosoever eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him, and I will raise him up on the Last Day."

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, OR CONFESSION

WHAT does the Catholic Church teach on Confession? Who instituted it? Is it of divine origin? What does she teach concerning the power of the priest to forgive sins?

Now this subject is regarded by some who are not Catholics with horror, by others with contempt, and by all with some compassion for us, because we believe in such a thing as what they understand Confession to be. And it is not at all unlikely that we also should regard it in the self-same light if it were what *they* consider it to be!

It would be well to know the exact doctrine of the Catholic Church on this subject, and her reasons for claiming it as of the deposit of Faith; to show how completely, and with what exactitude, it fits into the structure and the plan of Redemption, and the economy of God for the salvation of mankind. Let us examine that plan.

The Catholic Church calls our attention to the fact that when, in the fullness of time, Almighty God undertook the work of the Redemption of mankind, He made of human nature a very important instrument to that effect. In fact, He effected it entirely through the instrumentality of human nature. So that, throughout the entire and mysterious work, He never permits us to forget that He has consulted for our dual nature, *viz.*, our bodies as well as our souls. And that, though He desires primarily and chiefly to save our souls, yet He will do it through the body and the senses. Hence you are aware that Christ the Redeemer did not appear in the world immediately on His coming into it, as a full-grown man. He came in a more human, though in a very mysterious manner. Though His Mother was a virgin, and a very holy virgin, nevertheless she was absolutely and entirely a creature; and though sinless, yet one of the daughters of Adam.

And though Our Lord was conceived and made man in her womb, without the interposition of man, and though He was mysteriously born of her, yet He was bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh. In a word, though an infant at His birth, a man like ourselves, yet He was, in deed and in truth, very God and very man.

For thirty years He lived a hidden life, working, it is believed, like an ordinary boy or young man, at the carpenter's bench, beside him who held the place of a father toward Him; all His life up to this, as far as the gaze of the outer world was concerned, was very human; though in reality He was the Creator of the universe and the God of heaven and earth.

When the day came that He was to go forth to begin His missionary career, what did He do? He first went into the desert, and fasted and prayed for forty days. And coming forth from the desert, how does He begin to teach men, or to preach His doctrines? Why, being God, does He not at once enlighten their intelligence?

Because He has too much respect for the gift which He has already conferred on them. He wishes to consult their intelligence and their will. He will have His doctrines received freely, and embraced with joy. He preaches and teaches, but men may accept or reject, as they choose. So far we see that God remembered our human nature in His dealings with us.

In all His relations with mankind during the three years of His missionary life, the self-same rule holds. Whenever He exercises His divine power and works miracles, He does so in such a manner as to have us see that He attaches importance to the fact that we are governed considerably by our senses. Therefore He goes through what would seem to be, in the case of a mere human being, a trifling ceremony.

Look, for instance, at how He mixes the spittle of His sacred mouth with clay, and rubbing the eyes of the blind, heals them; He touches the lepers, and sends one to a pool to wash before he is cured. See how He takes the hand of the dead maiden, and calls her to life. See how He touches the coffin in which the body of the widow's son rests. See how He stands over the open grave of Lazarus, and before calling

him forth from the dead, first looks up to heaven, and with groans appeals to His Eternal Father. See how He prays, and blesses the loaves and fishes before multiplying them; how He commands Peter to go and take the stater from the fish's mouth, in order to pay the tax for both.

All of these simple acts which He made use of in the doing of some of the most sublime works of His divine life, prepare us to expect, and serve to show us that the most divine of results, and the most mysterious effects, may be clothed with a simple external ceremony; and may follow from what is apparently a very little cause. And, indeed, all instruments and all external ceremony can be and are made if He wills, equally the channel of His greatest wonders.

Consequently, neither you nor I are at all astonished when we hear and see that Christ instituted Baptism for the taking away of original sin. Why, then, should we be astonished when we hear that He instituted some other external ceremony, which would signify and operate through the power which He gives it, the remission of other sins? Do not all the Christian denominations, not Catholic, hold that He instituted what they call the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? And that is not considered meaningless.

If, therefore, Christ did really institute another such ceremony, and attach to it the grace of pardon for sin after Baptism, surely it would not be so wonderful—seeing, as we have seen, that it was usual for Him to observe such a course, and, in fact, if He did not do this in this case, it would be contrary to His custom.

Now that is exactly what the Catholic Church says He did.

She says Christ the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, the Redeemer of mankind, did, when on earth, really and indeed institute seven such external rites and ceremonies, which she calls Sacraments. That to each of these Sacraments He gave a divine power, whereby and through which the grace of God is conferred and produced in the soul. That these seven Sacraments are: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony. That of these seven Sacraments Christ instituted two for the direct and immediate forgiveness and removal of sin; the remaining

five He instituted for the purpose of increasing and augmenting the grace already conferred through either of the other two.

Baptism, she says, takes away original sin, Penance removes the guilt of the sins committed after Baptism.

Penance is to the regenerate what Baptism is to the unregenerate. Through Baptism the latter are begotten to Christ; through Penance the life of the soul is again renewed when destroyed by sin.

Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins are forgiven which are committed after Baptism. It is a Sacrament in which, by the absolution of the priest, joined to the confession of the penitent with true and heartfelt sorrow and purpose of amendment, the sinner obtains pardon of his sins.

Consequently, not every one receives pardon of sin; only those who are truly sorry in their heart of hearts; only those who are firmly resolved never to fall into sin again.

Consequently, you see how very unjust and how very false it is to say that the Catholic Church or the Catholic priest pardons sin for money. If such a thing were attempted, the result would be a most heinous crime.

You understand, therefore, that Confession is only one of three parts in the Sacrament of Penance, which the person who receives it supplies. The priest gives the absolution. The person who receives it confesses his sins, is truly and heartily sorry for them, promises amendment, and makes satisfaction to Almighty God for the injury done Him.

Now, the Catholic Church teaches that in order to receive pardon for sin, it is not always necessary to confess. For instance, if a person is dying, and unable to do so, or if a person has not the opportunity of doing so. But in all such cases the desire to confess our sins is always supposed, and the confession must be made afterward, if it becomes possible. The confession may be made to any priest in the world, provided he has jurisdiction. (This for the same reason that a civil magistrate can only sit in judgment in cases in which he has jurisdiction.)

And on the part of the priest, Almighty God, and the very nature of the Sacrament, place upon the priest a re-

sponsibility and obligation of silence which he is bound to preserve, even at the cost of his life. So that, in very fact and truth, though priests are human as well as other men; though they lose their reason; though they unfortunately (though, thanks to God, very rarely), fall away from the Faith and apostatize, it is yet to be heard of or known that any of them ever broke or violated the seal of solemn silence with which the Sacrament of Penance binds their lips. Even the civil law in various nations, not Catholic, has come to recognize this, after having in vain tried to break down the priest's determination and courage.

Now that we understand what Confession is; now that we understand that the Catholic Church says that God is its Author; that Christ instituted it as a part of the Sacrament of Penance—let us ask her to produce her evidence of this claim, so that we may judge for ourselves as to its value.

The first answer is the general one, that she was placed here by Christ, and if she has established that claim, it should be and is a necessary consequence that her doctrines are all from Him, and therefore true.

Her second answer is, if Christ the Lord did not institute it, who did? Who is its author? Who was guilty of this bold and daring invention, which essays to transfer and to delegate to mortal man the power which belongs to God alone? By whom was this done? Was it gradually or immediately received? At what time? On what occasion? And in what place?

It will not do to ignore a fact of so important a nature. Confession is among men. It is here and has been here for twenty centuries, and has been practiced by men of the most exalted intelligence and the widest knowledge that the race has known. And if history tells us the origin of almost everything we possess or know of, how is it that it is silent as the grave on a matter of such momentous importance to mankind as this?

We know when America was discovered; when and how our native cities were founded. We can tell when and by whom London and Paris and even Rome were built. We know the origin of the measurement of time, who invented

the telephone, who discovered the tremendous power and use of electricity and steam and gas. We can trace the invention of guns from the present perfect instrument to the earliest stage of its use. We know when printing and clocks and glass and everything that we make use of was first discovered. But we are lost in gloom and mystery when we come to ask who instituted at first the confession of sin to a priest. And the most wonderful feature of this wonderful fact is that there was no one to rebel against it, no one to deny, no one to repudiate this extraordinary institution, for fifteen centuries!

Could any one believe such a monstrous assumption as that the whole world conspired in such a gigantic imposture, and yet left no evidences of it in the pages of history for twenty centuries! Remember that the confession of sin to a priest is practiced and regarded as an institution of Christ, in every nation, and by the people of every clime and tongue under the sun.

If, then, we find it in every land, and received by the people of every nation for fifteen hundred years without protestation, and after that by the great body of Christians to this day, and if no one from first to last ever suggested or dared to suggest the name of any other than Christ for its Author, in the name of God, let us listen with reasonable submission to the whisperings of our interior convictions, and acknowledge that Christ, and He alone, is its Author. That Christ, and He alone, could conceive so merciful, so beneficent, and so easy an institution for the forgiveness of sin to man, the price of whose Redemption He paid by the shedding of His own blood!

But this is not all the evidence which the Catholic Church furnishes for her claim that Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance, that is to say, that He gave power to His Church, and therefore to her bishops and priests, to forgive sin. The Father "hath given Him power to do judgment, because He is the Son of man" (St. John v. 27).

She says: You will, of course, admit that Christ could and did forgive sin when on earth. That He forgave sin, not only as the Son of God, but even in His own words, "as the Son of man." "That you may know that the Son of man

has power to forgive sin, said He to the man sick of the palsy, take up thy bed and go into thy house."

You will doubtless admit also that if Christ so desired He could confer that same power on the Apostles, and on their successors. Consequently, if we find that He really wished to confer it, and used words whose plain meaning is the conferring of that power on the Apostles, the laws and canons of sound interpretation require us to admit that He conferred it.

Did He use such words? The Catholic Church says, Yes. She refers us to various passages in the Sacred Scriptures. On one occasion when giving the Apostles their commission, He said to them, "*All power* is given Me in heaven and on earth; as the Father sent Me, so I also send you." And again, "Going forth, teach all nations . . . and whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven. And whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

Surely the power conferred is spiritual; surely there was nothing more necessary to be loosed than the chains of sin, which, and which alone, bind the soul of man!

Again, on another occasion, addressing Peter, the chief of the Apostles, He says: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

Once more, after He arose from the dead, and appeared to His disciples on one of the various occasions when He came among them, St. John tells us that "He breathed on them, and said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

Now, then, from this passage it is plain that Christ gave some extraordinary power to the Apostles. The act demands this conclusion, as well as the words used. In another place in Holy Writ, Almighty God is described as breathing into the face of Adam the breath of life, and making him a living soul. The action of the Redeemer is of a like character, and certainly, and according to the rules of interpretation, some

unusual office and authority were conferred on the Apostles. Therefore immediately follows this significant action on the part of Christ, the extraordinary commission which He gives them. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive," etc.

Now, the first thing to observe about this passage is, that if Christ desired to confer this power of which we speak, and if He wished to say that to the Apostles, He could have found no plainer, no more appropriate, no more intelligible words in which to express His desire.

The second thing to be noted in this passage is, that the words used on this occasion are exactly the same as Christ used on every occasion when He exercised, *as man*, the power which His Eternal Father confided to Him, *viz.*, that of forgiving sins when on earth. For instance, when He healed the paralytic, and when He forgave Magdalene.

Thirdly, it is to be observed, that on these occasions of which I speak, the multitude surrounding the Redeemer knew exactly that He meant the real forgiveness and removal of sin from the soul. For they immediately exclaimed, "He blasphemeth—who can remit sin, except God alone?" Does He say that they do not understand Him correctly when they say this? By no means, but works another miracle, greater in their eyes and more convincing, because they have the evidence before them of the result. Why, then, do we admit that He meant it in one case, and denied it in the other? Surely the only reason can be—either that He could not confer and delegate it, or that it would be unbecoming His dignity, or too much for our humanity.

The first will not be admitted by any one. The second cannot be, as we have seen before. It cannot be too much for human nature to receive this power, when we know that God condescended to become man in the person of Jesus Christ. When God has exalted human nature by assuming it into His own divine person, and has united it to that person by a bond so mysterious and so perfect as the hypostatic union; surely after this, nothing is too much to expect of God for man.

Dear Christians, did not God come Himself to redeem us? Did not God die for us in His human nature? Is it,

then, anything else but the beneficence of His divine compassion and will toward man, that He should select this means whereby to apply the price and the fruit of His Redemption to the souls of men, and through the medium and instrumentality of men like themselves, wash their souls in the waters of divine grace which He purchased for them?

This seems to be the very thing we should expect, and the very extreme of the mercy and compassion of God for poor, frail man.

PURGATORY—PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

UNTIL quite recently none of the Christian denominations except the Catholic Church would tolerate, or did tolerate, such a doctrine as that there existed in the life to come a place, or rather a state, of punishment, in which some souls suffer and so expiate the evil deeds they may have committed in this life. Now, however, the case is very different. Not only is this belief tolerated and encouraged, but some among them have gone so far as to give up all faith in the doctrine of eternal punishment, or hell. Some time ago it was all hell and no purgatory; now it is all purgatory and no hell.

The doctrines of the Catholic Church, however, never change. They are as unchangeable as God Himself. As the knowledge of God is always the same, so must the truths which He has revealed be also always the same. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

While the Catholic Church teaches that the doctrine of purgatory is one of the revealed truths belonging to the deposit of Faith, she also says that it is equally of faith and equally true that the sinner who leaves this world guilty of grievous sin goes to hell to suffer forever. But what is purgatory?

St. Thomas, one of the greatest theologians and philosophers the Church has produced, defines it to be: "A place or state in which those who die in the grace and friendship of God have to suffer the punishment due their sins, the guilt of which, as well as the eternal punishment due to them, has been already remitted through their sorrow and repentance."

From this definition you will conclude immediately how very closely connected all the doctrines of the Catholic Church are with one another. Even when Almighty God remits to the sinner the guilt and the eternal punishment due to his

sin when he repents, nevertheless He reserves some temporal punishment and some satisfaction which must be undergone by the sinner. Now, then, if the sinner should die before having paid that just debt, God must have provided a place or state for the soul in which it may have the means of expiating it. That state the Catholic Church calls purgatory.

Let us examine her reasons for holding and teaching this doctrine as one of the revealed truths.

1st, then, it appeals to the reason and intelligence and heart of every Christian and of every man in the world who believes in God at all. It appeals to all the higher instincts and principles of human nature; and these cannot substantially lead us astray.

2d. In the second place, it has been taught as among the elementary truths of religion, not only in all ages of the Christian era, but also among the Jewish people, as is manifest in the liturgy and practices of both.

3d. It has also the manifest warrant of Sacred Scripture.

It appeals to the reason. It would surely seem, from the time that one is able to grasp such a truth at all, that a man who thought the matter over seriously, having sound intelligence, could scarcely deny the existence of a future state of temporary punishment. And the conviction grows that among the causes which contribute to the spread of infidelity, the denial of this future state of expiation is very prominent. The doctrine that there are only two states immediately after death, one of eternal happiness for the good, the other of eternal misery for the wicked, is enough to drive into despair or madness on the one hand, or into infidelity on the other, any ordinary man who realizes to himself that he is neither a great saint nor a great sinner, but just about as good as his neighbor.

How can a man, who lives simply the average, everyday life, attending, perhaps, with only moderate carefulness to his obligations, but, at the same time, while guilty of many faults, yet remains substantially upright; how can he, in good faith, reconcile himself to the belief that he is ready for, and will be sent by a just God, to either heaven,

the abode of the blessed, or to hell, the abode of the reprobate, immediately after death, and forever?

Surely this is not in conformity with reason. Hence no one can be surprised to find men losing faith in any system which proposes it to them. Consequently, the very existence of God supposes the existence of purgatory.

God exists. Therefore, purgatory exists. And if purgatory does not exist, there is, and there can be, no God at all.

Now this is a very bold and daring expression, but it is perfectly true and logical, for the very notion of God implies justice. God could not be God, God could not exist, without justice, perfect, unspeakable, infinite. Justice supposes that He gives to every one that which he merits, whether of reward or punishment. It is absolutely impossible to suppose that a just God will allow crime to go unpunished, or virtue without reward. Consequently, heaven and hell exist, the former for those who are extremely good, who have led, while on earth, lives of the most exalted virtue, without spot or blemish; who have died in the fulness of Faith, and Hope, and Charity, and are prepared for the enjoyment of the perfect vision of the Godhead when they die; and for those who, having sinned, have fully and entirely repented.

But, how very rarely that occurs! How much more frequently men die, having led a very common and very earthly life!

On the other hand, remember that God is perfect holiness, the very essence of it. In order to enjoy the union with God for which it is made, the soul must be perfectly pure, and in order to be pure, it must be purified. Hence, the necessity of purgatory.

Let me bring the matter nearer home to your mind. You have had a friend or relative who died. Let us say, your mother, or your sister. She was very good, you know she was. But had she no faults? Was she really as good as an angel? Did she never get angry, or backbite her friend or neighbor, or tell a little story, or say a bad word, or entertain a thought of momentary hatred or jealousy? Did she fulfil to the letter every one of her obligations? In other

words, was she absolutely without fault, or was she not, rather, a good woman with some faults? If that is the case, you cannot expect she went immediately to heaven, and, of course, you would not harbor for a moment the thought of eternal punishment for her. Therefore, you must find a state in which she will be first purified from these stains, where she shall pay the debt she owes to God, and afterwards be admitted into heaven.

Surely this is in the highest conformity with reason. How perfectly and entirely the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead accord with the highest aspirations of the human heart! This is recognized in every religion in the world, not only among the Catholic people, but even among nations that are not Christian at all. The very aspirations of the heart and soul are toward a union and a communion with those whom death separates from us. So true is this, and so utterly unable are people to overcome that longing, that those who do not believe in purgatory and prayers for the dead, nevertheless not only have religious services over their bodies at death, but with very apparent inconsistency, hold memorial services frequently, and in some cases, years after death. Thus do they, as well as the whole human family, bear testimony to the necessity, and therefore to the truth, of this doctrine.

What shall I say on the second point? *Viz.*, that every liturgy extant throughout the world, as well as all the liturgies of the Church, from the very days of the Apostles, in the most explicit manner possible, declare this to have been among the most prominent doctrines and practices of the faithful at all times. All the writers, from those of the apostolic age down to the present day bear testimony to the same effect.

Take, for instance, Dionysius, the Areopagite, who, in his work on the "Ecclesiastical Hierarchy," devotes an entire chapter to the treating of this subject.

Take again the great Bishop, St. John Chrysostom, who, in one of his homilies to the people, reminds them that the obligation of praying for the dead came down from the Apostles.

Take, again, Tertullian, the very oldest of the Latin

Fathers. He advises a certain widow to pray for the repose of her departed husband's soul, that he may participate in the resurrection. And, he adds, that unless she discharge this duty, and make oblations for him on the anniversary day of his death, she may be said to have divorced him.

Take, again, Cyprian of Carthage, who says that no brother departing this life should name a churchman as executor; and if he did, neither oblation should be made nor sacrifice offered for his repose.

Take the great and learned Origen, who is among the most diffuse writers on this subject, and treats it in the plainest language.

From the testimony of all these writers we learn that the doctrine which the Catholic Church teaches now is exactly the same as that which it taught always with regard to purgatory and prayers for the dead.

Hence we find that in the Sacrifice of the Mass from the earliest times, the dead were remembered even in its most solemn part, which is the Canon, and immediately after the Consecration. Hence, also, they had what were called dyp-tiches or lists of the dead, which were read out regularly during the celebration of the Mysteries, for the congregation assembled.

One of the last words of his mother to the great St. Augustine was a request that he would remember her at the altar of God.

Lastly, this doctrine in the minds of the Catholic Church has the evident warrant of Holy Writ. The Sacred Scriptures in various places record that offerings and prayers were made for the dead. The patriarch Tobias exhorted his son to do this. And on the death of Saul a fast of seven days was made by his friends. So that we learn from these, as well as from other facts, that praying for the dead was quite common among the Hebrew people. Consequently we are not surprised to learn from the second Book of the Machabees, Chapter xii., that their valiant leader sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver, which he received from his people, to Jerusalem, to offer in sacrifice for the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection.

For, if he had not hoped that they who were slain in

battle should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. Now even if we Catholics should grant (which we do not), that the Books of the Machabees are apocryphal, they have at least the merit of history, and therefore record a fact. This fact shows distinctly that the Jewish people taught and believed in purgatory and prayers for the dead.

Hence, when Christ the Redeemer preached His Gospel there was no need that He should teach it as He taught and proved other doctrines. He found this doctrine in practice before Him among the people, and if it had not been correct and according to His desire, He would certainly have corrected it as He did other doctrines. Instead of that, however, we find that He recorded it, and thus sanctioned it.

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, among other places, the twelfth chapter, He distinguishes between two kinds of sin, and says, "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come."

And so the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead is not only demanded by reason, but it has the warrant of every age of the Christian era, has been the practice of the Church for twenty centuries, and has the warrant of Scripture. Now again it is making its way to the hearts of those from whom it was rudely torn away. While it is an impulse of the human heart to remember with tenderness the dead, it is most consoling to know that we can benefit them by our prayers and suffrages; and that instead of standing sorrowfully at the gate of the future, and hanging over their new-made grave, we can follow them even into the realms of the spiritual world, there commune with their departed spirits, and bring back to our own hearts from the act a new stimulus to a more exalted life.

INDULGENCES

THERE are very few non-Catholics who have ever taken any interest in the study of the Christian religion, or its history in the world, who have not come across, in some shape or other, or who have not heard the accusations made against the Catholic priesthood and the Catholic Church since the sixteenth century, that, on the payment of a sum of money, they grant a license to commit sin. It is very hard, indeed, to believe that such accusations are believed, and are honestly made in a community by respectable people, and among those who know you, and who treat you with all the outward marks of respect which they manifest toward others in the community.

In order to know the doctrines of the Church properly, it is always well, and, in fact, necessary to keep before one's mind the fact that they are very closely connected with one another, in fact, so closely that they cannot be separated. They are the logical sequences of one another, all forming a complete and perfect system, as harmonious and symmetrical as possible.

More than once your attention has been called to the fact that the best way to study the truth of the Catholic doctrine is to examine into the claim which she makes as having come from God, and teaching her doctrines on His authority. When one has convinced himself as to the validity or invalidity of that claim, the rest should be very easy of comprehension.

In order to understand this subject properly it will be well to recall what has already been said, *viz.*, that the confession of sin did not in every case mean the remission of sin; and that instead of being able to purchase pardon, the attempt would be a heinous crime. That in fact and deed the confession of sin must in every conceivable case be ac-

accompanied with heart-felt sorrow and firm purpose of amendment, together with a desire to satisfy the offended justice of God.

Now, the doctrine treated herein depends for its principle on this doctrine of satisfaction to God. An Indulgence, instead of being a remission of sin, or a license to commit sin in the future, has absolutely nothing at all to do with the pardoning of sin, whether past, or present, or future.

Now, in the name of common sense and wisdom, could any person think that that could be a doctrine of any system of religion claiming to be founded by God Himself?

But if an Indulgence is not this, what is it? I answer, it is the remission by the Church, in virtue of the judicial authority committed to her ("I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,") of a part, or of the entire *temporal* punishment due to sin, and accepted by God instead of that punishment.

Now, then, we see that an Indulgence has nothing to do with sin or its remission; it remits only the *punishment* and that only the *temporal* punishment which usually remains after the guilt of sin and the eternal punishment have been remitted.

If we admit that the Church has the power to remit sin itself in the Sacrament of Penance, we certainly should be ready to grant her the lesser power of remitting the temporal punishment due to it, if there is such a thing as temporal punishment remaining.

Consequently, if we can show satisfactorily that this exists, our thesis should be established.

Let us, therefore, produce the evidence.

The Catholic Church says that Almighty God, even when He forgives sin, reserves some degree of punishment for the transgression. In the first place, ask your own conscience and feelings. Whenever trials or afflictions come, is there not an instinctive thought to refer these to some neglect of duty or some offence done, even though one may not have any consciousness of guilt at the moment? This impulse, this feeling, is universal in every religious system, but especially in the religion of Christ, in which any one familiar with the Sacred Scriptures will readily see that God

does punish the sinner, even after the sinner has endeavored to obtain forgiveness.

So thoroughly is this regarded as an elementary principle in the relations of God with man, that we find it running through the history of the human race since the Fall of our first parents. When God pardoned Adam and Eve, did He not yet punish them with temporal afflictions of a very grave character, and of grave consequence to themselves as well as to their posterity?

When He sent Nathan to David to declare His judgment to him, and when Nathan, in the name of God, pardoned the king, did he not also distinctly remind him that there remained still a temporal affliction for him in the death of his son, for which David, in vain, endeavored to satisfy? Again, did not God punish the same king for another transgression, by inflicting punishment on the whole nation?

Again, have we not examples of the same fact, evidence of the same truth, in the punishment of Moses and Aaron, as well as in the penances of Job? Is not the example of the Ninivites before us, to show us how God reserves temporal afflictions even after the guilt of sin has been remitted?

Nor is it less evident from the New Testament that this is the case. And why should it be? The principle of satisfaction to God is the same in the Old as well as the New Law, and if the satisfaction done in the Old Law had any merit, it derived it exactly from the same source and fountain, namely, the merits of Christ, which gave value, and give value, to anything man did or does of a penitential character.

Hence, Christ the Lord, instead of forbidding these works of penance, which He found in the world, sanctions and confirms them, merely correcting *the manner* of performing them. Therefore, did He hold up the Ninivites as an example of penance.

This, indeed, is so thoroughly understood in practice, at least in recent times, that we find nations and governments, not Catholic at all, proclaiming days of fasting, humiliation, and public penitential prayers.

Indeed, the only conceivable objection to it would be if it should derogate from the merits of Christ. But this is

fully answered by saying that these works acquire their efficacy entirely from the merits of the Redeemer, and in virtue of His Passion and death.

We have now, I think, very fully shown that God Almighty reserves a temporal punishment for the sinner after having pardoned his sin. We have shown that works of penance, fasting and so forth, can avert and does avert that punishment.

We have shown that this principle must be sought for from the very nature of the case, in the attributes of God, and His relations with man.

Consequently, all true repentance means that we try to satisfy the justice of God by doing these works of penance, which, we learn from the Word of God, may placate Him.

Having now established this principle, let us see if it is held in the Christian Church. Yes, from the very dawn of Christianity, in fact, there was nothing more conspicuous in the discipline of the Church than the manner in which she demanded and exacted the fulfilment of the penances which she imposed on penitents. She superintended the performances of these penances herself. She regulated them in her canons. She classified them according to the nature and gravity of the crime or sin committed. While some were for forty days, some were for months, others for a year, others for many years, and some extended over a whole lifetime.

Some of these penances consisted in lying prostrate at the door of the church. Some penances were done farther in, and some were allowed to participate in a certain portion of the public service.

Now, it will be readily admitted, I think, that the Church, which received the power of binding and loosing everything *whatsoever* under her jurisdiction and relating to the soul, certainly had the power to relax or to lessen these works of penance which she imposed if, in her judgment, it were advisable. Now, then, this is exactly what she does when she gives an Indulgence. This is what an Indulgence means. It means that the Church, instead of obliging a sinner to perform the works of penance which her ancient canons direct and regulate and enjoin in his case, remits these works, and on condition that he performs some smaller and much more

easy work, she supplies the remainder of his penance from the treasury of merits of which she claims to be the custodian and possessor; and which are, first and above all, the merits of Christ, which are infinite; secondly, the merits of His holy Mother, and of the saints and servants of God, and whose merits derive their efficacy from those of the Redeemer.

These the Church presents to Almighty God in behalf of the sinner, hence, St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, says: "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh, for His body, which is the Church."

You will ask now, probably, whether this practice has been observed in the Church? Yes. The most convincing testimony may be adduced from the very earliest writers, from those even that may be said to have spoken with the Apostles: and assuredly spoken to those who had seen them and lived in their day. Such, for example, as Origen and Tertullian. And after them there was the great Bishop of Carthage, St. Cyprian, in whose profuse writings on those who fell away from the Faith, he specially treats of this matter, as referring to their return, and the conditions on which they were to be readmitted "To the Peace of the Church."

There were Cyril of Jerusalem and the illustrious Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. There were numerous writers of the early and subsequent ages of the Church, from the days when St. Paul punished the incestuous Corinthian for his soul's sake, and afterwards released him from the punishment in consideration of his better dispositions, to this day, who all bear witness that the Church always claimed this power and authority, and claimed it as a necessary corollary from her divine origin, her divine constitution, and the divine authority and prerogative with which Christ endowed her, when He sent her among men, and said to her, "All power is given Me in heaven, and on earth. As the Father sent Me, I also send you. I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever you shall bind upon the earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

Having now seen what an Indulgence is, and that the Church always exercised the power of granting it, you may ask me, did individual men ever abuse these privileges?

It would indeed be extraordinary if, since men at some period or other have abused everything, even the most sacred, which God gave them, they did not at some time, and in some places, abuse even these privileges. But the Church always rebuked, condemned, and punished these faithless children of hers who were guilty of such crime. And who will hold a mother who fulfils her duty responsible for the conduct of a son who afflicts her, and fills her heart with grief by his disobedience and his waywardness?

This subject leads, quite naturally, to another which stands in close relation to it, namely, the use of crosses, medals, rosaries, scapulars, etc., which Catholics keep about them, and which they treat with so much respect. In general, these are objects of devotion—in themselves, of course, valueless. But each of them is connected with, and has some relation to some fact in the history of the past; either, for instance, some mystery of the Redemption, which they bring to our mind; or some evidence of the goodness of God, manifested by a fact proving His special protection.

Or they relate to some one of the servants of God, who in his life showed some special characteristics that attract our appreciation and our devotion, and whom we desire to imitate.

These objects are blessed by the Church with special prayers, and privileged with indulgences of greater or less importance. For instance: Here is a crucifix, blessed and privileged with the plenary indulgence at the hour of death. Now, in the first place, that crucifix reminds us that Our Redeemer died for us on a cross. On that account it excites pious emotions in one's heart, and hence, acts of faith and hope and charity to Almighty God, and sorrow for our sins. Moreover, when we come to the hour of death, we can, by holding it in our hand, and making some prayers to Almighty God, by resigning ourselves to His holy will, and accepting our sufferings in union with the merits of Christ, as a penance and punishment for sins, obtain a full remission of all the *temporal* punishment due to the sins we may

have committed; and which punishment may still remain to be endured.

The cross itself, as an object of devotion, has been in use in the Church since the earliest times. Tertullian speaks of it as being quite common among the Christians of the first century. Here are rosary beads—little beads strung together, and divided into five distinct parts of eleven beads each. These constitute one-third of the Rosary. That is to say, the Rosary is divided into fifteen parts, corresponding to the fifteen mysteries of the Redemption, *viz.*, The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity of Our Lord, The Presentation, and the Finding in the Temple. These are the Joyful Mysteries. Next are the Sorrowful Mysteries, and following the Glorious. Even those who are not of the Faith can readily see that whatever brings these mysteries vividly to our minds, and helps to keep them there, should be of benefit to us.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND THE SAINTS

WHAT place does the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints occupy in the worship of the Catholic Church? What is the doctrine of the Church on images and relics of Christ and the Saints?

In order to understand this subject properly and fully, it will be very useful to take a few moments to consider the plan which Almighty God formed and executed for the Redemption of mankind.

You all know, of course, the history of the Fall of our first parents, as narrated in the Book of Genesis in the Holy Scripture. We read there that when Adam and Eve fell into sin, that God, in His infinite goodness and mercy, instead of casting away forever from His sight the guilty pair whom He had made and endowed with gifts far above all the rest of Creation, immediately conceives in His divine mind a plan truly Godlike and mysterious, by which He would repair fully and entirely the evil which they had wrought, not only on themselves, but also on the entire work of God to the end of time.

The Creator looked over His glorious work as it spread out before him, like a panorama, from that moment to the end of time. He saw, from the eternal hills, the injury which was done to His work, not only then, by that awful blow struck at its very foundations, and in its infancy; but He saw, moreover, each crease and bruise and dangerous spot in it; and He there and then determined that every injury should be repaired, every wound healed, every stain and blemish removed. Not only this, but He resolved that the new work, the remedy, which He would apply, should show forth, in its magnificent perfection, His wisdom and His omnipotence, in a far higher and more wonderful degree than that which He had already done.

The choice of three methods were His by which He could redeem man.

First, He might have pardoned man immediately, but if He did that, His justice would have remained outraged forever. Secondly, He might have sent an angel, clothed with human nature, to pay the penalty of man's sin, but that would have been only one step better. His justice would still remain outraged; for, after all, an angel is only a creature, and God is God. There would have been no proportion between the outrage and the reparation. There remained therefore the last and only method by which strict and rigorous justice could be satisfied. He resolved that in the fulness of time another Eve and another Adam should appear in the world, and take the places of and undo the injury which had been done by the first Eve and the first Adam.

Where shall He find this new Adam and Eve? For if they are to undo the injury and completely destroy the sin of the first Adam and Eve, they must necessarily be superior to the first. The river is not purer than its source; and if the new Adam is not of a higher order and of greater perfection than the first, it will only repeat the risk of a new sin against God to have him come into the world at all. Nevertheless, he must have human nature, for otherwise he cannot take the vicarious office of satisfying for the human race, and of paying back to Almighty God the debt which Adam contracted.

Consequently, he must be born of woman, and where shall He find that woman? She is to take the place of Eve, and as Eve participated in the sin of the first Adam, so this new Eve must participate in the redemption and purification of man from sin by the second Adam.

She must be a creature of flesh and blood, like ourselves; one of the race; for otherwise, the Redeemer who is to be born of her cannot be of our nature. Where shall He look among the children of men for this woman, who is to be the mother of the Redeemer, and take the place of Eve? Eve came forth from the hand of God, pure and spotless and fair as the dawn of morning. Is it not becoming, and what we ought to expect of the sanctity of God, that if the new

Adam is to be greater than the old Adam, so the second Eve should be greater, more beautiful and perfect, than the first? Surely, if God can have it so, it will be so.

But who can doubt the omnipotence of God? Who can harbor for a moment such a thought as that God cannot, by His power, produce, or has not the means of producing on earth again a woman from the side of Adam, and yet preserved from his sin?

Hear, now, what the Catholic Church has to say to all this, and discover whether it is not exactly in accordance with, and whether it does not fit perfectly, the plan of Redemption adopted by God Almighty, and which every Christian denomination is supposed to hold? Whether, considering every phase of the matter, any other answer can satisfy?

Here is the answer of the Catholic Church:

Almighty God, looking out over the human race in its fallen state, determined to send as its Redeemer His own divine Son, the second Person of the Godhead, to assume to Himself human nature, and thereby and therein perfect God and perfect Man, to pay the price of man's Redemption by His death.

Being God, it was not fitting that even in His humanity He should be tainted by any, even the most remote, contact with sin. Consequently He prepared for His dwelling-place for nine months, the womb of a Virgin whom He had selected for His Mother. He prepared her for that high office and dignity, in view of His own future merits, by preserving her free from the stain of Adam's sin, and by adorning her soul with every virtue that could render her perfect and worthy of being His Mother.

He made her fairer than all the daughters of Eve, and in beauty far surpassing Eve herself, even when she was called forth first into life from the side of Adam. She was a creature, to be sure, and only a creature; but she was endowed with every grace and privilege that could fit her for her exalted office. God created the angels, but to none of them did He ally Himself so closely as He did to that creature in whose womb He took His human nature. Therefore we must conclude that in justice to His own sanctity and His divine nature, He must have superadded to the natural

qualities and graces of her human soul other graces, which transcended even the angelic gifts.

This creature is she who is known to the whole Christian world as the Virgin Mary, and whom Catholics denominate the *Blessed* Virgin Mary, because of her near and singular relations to God Himself.

The position therefore which she occupies in the worship of the Catholic Church, is, like her dignity and office in relation to God, a unique position.

To understand it, it is necessary for me to say that there are two kinds of honor which can be paid to beings. There is, first, supreme and divine honor, which is given to God, and to Him alone; and which, to give to any creature whatsoever, would be the awful crime of idolatry. That honor and worship is called *latría*. Secondly, there is what is called *dulia*, that is, a species of honor which is paid to the saints and angels of God, because of their nearness to God, and because they are the friends of God. Then there is a third species of honor, which is between both, which is the honor paid to the Blessed Virgin as being only a creature, yet nearer to God than any or all other creatures.

Now then, the Catholic Church says that to pay to the Blessed Virgin or the saints the honor due to God, even for one moment, would be the horrible sin of idolatry, which, of course, she detests from her soul. On the other hand, she says that it is lawful and useful and praiseworthy to honor the Blessed Virgin as the Mother of the Redeemer, and as the one creature above all others next to Him; and to honor the saints as the friends and servants of God, and to ask their prayers and intercession in our behalf.

Having now before our minds the exact position of the Blessed Virgin and the saints in the worship of the Catholic Church, let us see on what evidence of truth she holds this doctrine.

She first answers, as usual, and declares it to be one of the truths in the deposit of Faith originally committed to her care and guardianship.

Secondly: It is in strict conformity with reason; is a manifest deduction from and completion of the teachings of Christianity; is the same as was taught in the Apostolic

age. It is contained in the Apostles' Creed and in the Sacred Scripture.

First, then. Reason established it. The highest and best instincts of our nature impel us to honor those who deserve it, either by personal merit or by their office. No one will question this proposition, I am sure. Now, where shall we find a creature who occupies a place superior to that which Mary occupied? She was and is the Mother of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, Our Lord. And Christ is God. (Of course, I suppose that I am speaking to those who admit that Christ is God.) Now if Christ is God, and He only one person, and born of Mary, it necessarily follows, with the same mathematical precision as that two and two make four, that Mary is the Mother of God. But, perhaps, she is not His Mother *now*. She necessarily is, unless He has ceased to be man, which is not the case.

Mary, then, is the Mother of God. Is it not fit and proper that we should honor the Mother of God? We are commanded to honor our natural mother by God Himself. Is God the only Being whose Mother should not be honored? Did God, when He came on earth, set us an example to violate one of His own precepts? Do you remember that Jesus Christ lived in Nazareth, and He was subject to her and to Joseph for about thirty years? Why, then, if God honored her by becoming man in her womb; if He honored her when He lived on earth, why should *we* not honor her also?

The only reason which could possibly exist, would be if the honor paid to her derogated from, or lessened, the honor which is due to God by us. Now, that is not the case, and can never be the case, because in the mind of the Catholic Church, and in her teaching to all her children, there is always the distance between God and Mary that there is between the Creator and the creature; the same difference that there is between the infinite and the finite; an infinitely greater difference than there is between the boundless ocean and one single raindrop. In fact, all of Mary's virtues, all of her high prerogatives, and even all of her merits, came from God, as their source and fountain. Hence, instead of detracting from any of the honor or glory due to

God by honoring Mary, we enhance it, because we admire and praise and honor her as the work of His hands.

Surely we do not lessen the honor due to the artist by praising his pictures or his statues or his music! Surely we do not lessen the honor we owe to the chief magistrate of the state by honoring the members of his family, or one of the judges of the Supreme Court, or the Commander-in-Chief of the army! How, then, or by what process of reasoning, can we come to that inconsistent and contradictory conclusion in the case of the Blessed Virgin Mary?

But perhaps the saints and servants of God do not take any interest in us, and cannot hear us.

In answer to this, let us consider the latter portion of the Apostles' Creed, which, I suppose you, as well as I, say every day of our lives. After having made profession of faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, and in the mysteries of the Redemption, the Creed goes on to say, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the *communion of saints*, etc."

Now, what is meant by these words, "communion of saints"? Have they any signification, unless they imply that that portion of the kingdom of God which is in heaven is interested in us, who are fighting the battle of salvation here on earth? Is it not contrary to the principles of religion, the very elementary ones, too, which God has put in your heart, to say or to admit that the child whom you loved with every faculty of your soul, and who has been taken from you by death, now forgets you, and has no more interest in what happens you here on earth?

See the result of this craving of the human heart for communion with departed friends who were one in heart with the living. Why, when people had nothing in the religion in which they were brought up to justify their belief in this doctrine, they abandoned it, and turned over to spiritism.

Ah, but the Catholic Church responds to every want of the heart and soul, in this as in every other case that can possibly arise. Nothing can happen to us in life that she has not something to offer us, either by way of redress or of comfort, or of participation in our joy.

I shall not weary you by adducing or quoting the evidences of the early centuries, which are very numerous, to show you how entirely identical this doctrine is with that which was taught at that time. If I undertook that, I should simply have a difficulty in selecting from the many authors that speak of it just as I speak now. So also do the monuments of the early Christians, everywhere they are found in the world; and the liturgies and practices of the Church contribute their weighty share of evidence to the same effect.

What shall I say, finally, of the Holy Scriptures, as bearing testimony to this?

In the first place, from the Old Testament, we have the Book of Daniel, where we read that angels were sent by God to instruct the prophet. In Tobias (xii. 12): "When thou didst pray with tears and didst bury the dead . . . I offered thy prayer to the Lord."

We learn the same doctrine from the Book of Machabees. And coming to the New Testament, we take from among various passages of the same import, that passage in St. Luke (xv. 7), in which Our Lord expressly says that "There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just, who need not penance."

And in the Apocalypse (Rev. viii. 3, 4), does not the holy writer tell us that he saw an angel standing before a mystical altar in heaven, "having a golden censer, and there was given him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all the saints . . . and the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel."

Here, then, is our warrant for honoring and praying to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints: those great and glorious men and women, and faithful children, who having lived here in conformity with the teachings of God, and having overcome the enemies of salvation, are now rewarded with the Beatific Vision, the unveiled face of the Triune God.

THE MARRIAGE TIE

IT is not too much to begin this discourse by saying that no other subject can possibly form a more interesting topic for a Christian preacher, for a Christian audience, than the Sacrament of Matrimony. No other subject is more closely bound up with the happiness and the existence of mankind, whether considered individually or collectively, than this very subject of marriage. No other subject has or can have a more direct bearing on the character of our civilization. The sanctity and the inviolability of the Christian home and the Christian family cannot be too well guarded against the insidious approach of doctrines and practices calculated to destroy them both; nor can the importance of maintaining that sanctity be over-estimated, if we desire to preserve and perpetuate the blessings of Christian civilization.

It is not so long ago since a subject was proposed for discussion in some of the magazines of the country, the title of which was "Is Marriage a Failure?" The question was seriously put and discussed, just as if it had been a mere scientific theory; instead of having been, as it was and is, one of the corner-stones of Christian civilization.

Remove marriage, and what better should we be in our morals than the pagans of old, who worshiped in midnight orgies, and with revolting and abominable rites, and disgusting practices, the lowest and most degrading vices that man was ever given to, even in his savage state? Remove marriage, and what remains to hinder the foul and noxious slime of the grossest impurities from covering the face of the earth? It does, indeed, seem passing strange that such a discussion should take place. The fact that it could and did take place, establishes beyond any reasonable doubt that very strange theories are held about the state of matrimony.

Not so, however, with the Catholic Church. The doctrine on this, as on every subject regarding the salvation of man and the revelation of God, is exactly the same to-day as it was when she threw the mantle of her protection around the defenceless Katherine of Aragon; and in the face of the threat of her royal husband, declared and insisted that he was her lawful husband, and she his lawful wife. For this the Catholic Church saw the destruction of all her churches, convents, monasteries, and schools in England. She allowed her children to be torn from her arms, and all England forced away from the unity of the Faith, rather than by one word of sanction consecrate the crime which was sought to be and was committed against that one woman and against the marriage bond. Need I say that her teaching is to-day exactly the same as it was in those days that tried men's souls, now more than three hundred years ago? And while others are seeking and prescribing nostrums of every description for the healing of the wounds and woes of society, and for the general welfare of the marriage relation, she alone prescribes the self-same remedy as she has done from her first appearance in the world twenty centuries since. She proclaims to all mankind that the only remedy for the ills and trials of married life, as well as for all the other miseries of life, consists in the application of the teaching of Jesus Christ, which He placed in her charge to the end of time.

What is that teaching? What is marriage, or matrimony? What is its nature, origin, and purpose?

Matrimony, according to the Catholic Church, is "a Sacrament which gives grace to the husband and wife to live happily together, and to bring up their children in the fear and love of God." The Catechism of the Council of Trent defines it to be "the conjugal union of man and woman, legitimately contracted; that is to say, according to the laws of the Church, which union obliges both to live together and inseparably."

Bear in mind, that though in every proper and legitimate marriage there must be, and there is, the consent of the parties, which consent is of its nature, internal, and the mutual compact, which is external, and made in words; and

the obligation and duty to which they mutually bind themselves, and which follows the compact; and even though the very nature of the compact supposes, usually, at least, its consummation, nevertheless, the essence of the contract itself consists in the bond and obligation, which are expressed by the word *union*. The word conjugal is added to distinguish this contract from all others by which men and women freely bind themselves to fulfil certain obligations toward each other.

I have said that the contract must be legitimately made. Consequently, there are circumstances which render it unlawful and impossible.

Lastly, the obligation obliges both parties equally to live together inseparably. So, from the very nature of the contract, it is impossible to dissolve it during life.

Marriage may be considered in a twofold light, *viz.*, as simply a natural contract, and as it exists now among the heathen and infidel people; it was and is the union of one man with one woman. Contracted in any other way it is a departure from the designs of God, and from the original purposes of the married state. And this is the case under any circumstances.

If in the Jewish period, Almighty God in some instances tolerated polygamy, it was the cause of the circumstances of the period, and the hardness of the people's hearts. This the Redeemer distinctly states in the Gospel; and He adds "but it was not so from the beginning."

Observe, again, that it was never lawful under any dispensation, or at any time from the very origin of the human family, for a woman to have more than one husband. This is contrary to the essence of the contract, and to the first purposes of marriage.

Again, in the mind and according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, there is no such thing among Christians as a mere natural contract. To them it is and must necessarily be, always a Sacrament. No matter under what circumstances it is received, it is always a Sacrament. And as the Church alone has received care of the Sacrament, therefore she obliges, or rather, the nature of the act obliges, all who enter the married state to do so with her

guidance and with her sanction and blessing. To contract marriage in any other way is a grievous crime for the party concerned.

We now pass on to the origin of marriage and its purpose.

Every one acquainted with the first chapter of the Sacred Scriptures, knows that marriage is as old as the human race. It was instituted by Jehovah Himself in the garden of paradise. It was instituted with singular care that it should be a contract made with the full knowledge and entire freedom of the parties concerned, and for their own mutual benefit. This is all evident from the simple narrative which speaks of the marriage of our first parents.

You will, of course, have observed in the sacred narrative, first, that God, having made everything else, and having been sovereignly pleased with the perfection and beauty of His own divine handiwork, saw that in order to manifest His presence on the earth more perfectly, in order to complete His admirable work, there was yet to be created a being who should be capable of realizing and appreciating all that He had already done. He saw that He needed a being with faculties rendering him capable of representing Himself in the world of creation. This being was man. He was to be the crowning work of creation.

I call your attention to the marked difference between the manner in which the Creator dealt with man, and the manner in which He dealt with the rest of creation. When He had created the lower order of animals, He simply addressed them in these words, "Increase and multiply." But having created Adam and Eve, He left them perfectly free to enter the married or conjugal state. Their marriage and conjugal union was entirely their own act. He created Eve from one of Adam's ribs, and He did so, as theologians say, that Adam, knowing her to have been made from his own flesh, might love and cherish her with the conviction that in doing so he was loving himself. Hence St. Paul says, "No one ever hated his own flesh, but rather nourishes and cherishes it." And again, "So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies."

It was only when Adam took Eve in the presence of

God, and made her his wife, that the great Creator blessed them, and said to them, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth."

You will observe that God Himself blessed the first marriage, having instituted it, and made it a contract between one man and one woman. Marriage, therefore, is a holy state, and was at all times holy, when the contract was made within the limits prescribed by its nature, and by God Himself.

We come now to the sacramental character of marriage—that is to say, the nature of the contract as it exists in the Christian Dispensation, and according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church says that from the very beginning marriage was a holy institution. But in the Christian Dispensation it has received additional holiness from the fact that it has been raised by Christ, the Redeemer, to the dignity of being one of the seven Sacraments which He instituted as the channels of His grace. Through this Sacrament He gives to the husband and wife a special grace by which they are enabled to live happily together; to bear the trials which are always attendant on life, and to aid each other in attaining to the destiny which God had before His mind in placing us here. Hence the Catholic Church is very anxious as to the preparations for marriage. She is very anxious as to the respect and reverence which it should receive from those who purpose receiving it. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, calls it "a great Sacrament," and distinctly says it is a symbol of the union of Christ with His Church. Now, dear Christians, as the union between Christ and His Church is perpetual and incapable of being dissolved, so also is the matrimonial union of man and woman.

If I were to enter on producing evidence to show that this has been the teaching of the Christian Church from the beginning, I should weary your patience; for every writer from the dawn of the Christian era to the present day speaks to that effect. The Catholic Church teaches that no matter what occurs, no matter how great the afflictions, how unsuited the husband and wife may become to each other, or what crimes one or the other may commit, the bond which binds

them and makes them husband and wife can never be broken except by death.

The subject is so very extensive that it would be vain for me to attempt to do more than state the nature and origin of the matrimonial contract and its character as a Sacrament, in one discourse. I have to omit many points which would be interesting, but which, if treated at all, should be fully treated.

I shall close with a few words about mixed marriages, or the marriage of Catholics with those who are not Catholics.

The Church has placed an impediment in the way of mixed marriages. In some cases, as, for instance, in the case of non-Catholics who have not received Baptism marrying Catholics, their marriages are null and void. In cases where the non-Catholic is baptized, the marriage, though unlawful and sinful, unless contracted with the sanction of the Church, is still valid.

Why does the Church do this? This question may be asked by almost any person who has known instances of such marriages. I may say without fear of mistake, that such marriages, in the vast majority of cases, even when they are contracted with the consent of the Church reluctantly obtained, are invariably unhappy, and productive of evil. The result of such marriages, where there are children, and frequently even where there are no offspring, is indifference to religion, and the total abandonment of its practices.

If a non-Catholic should marry a Catholic, I warn him or her that the moment the Catholic party begins to abandon the practice of the Faith, that moment there is reason to believe that the household duty begins to be neglected, and the barriers are disappearing that stood up as a fortress wall in the conscience of the Catholic to preserve and maintain inviolate conjugal fidelity and conjugal love. On the other hand, there is no more faithful wife or husband in all the world than the Catholic who is unswervingly faithful to the obligations which Faith and religion impose, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Therefore, instead of interfering with its faithful prac-

tice, and undermining Faith, or their love for their religion, it is entirely to the benefit and happiness of the non-Catholic to encourage both in the life of the Catholic spouse. For how, I ask, can they be faithful to man, who are unfaithful and traitors to God and their consciences?

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND EDUCATION

THERE used to be in the earlier part of this century, and, indeed, until rather recently, an impression among those who are not of the Catholic Church, that that Church was the secret enemy and consistent foe of knowledge. How that impression arose and spread it is not for me to say, but I do say that a more unfounded accusation could scarcely be made against any institution in the world, human or divine.

The Catholic Church the foe of knowledge! Why, her office, her duty, is to teach. She is not free to omit that function, for Christ, the Lord, her Founder, gave it to her and imposed it on her as of strict obligation, in the words of His commission to her, "Going forth, teach all nations."

I am aware that primarily this refers to the soul, but I do not, of course, forget, nor do you forget either, that there is a knowledge unto death, as well as there is a knowledge unto life. And because of the danger of the admixture, and of the necessity of keeping the one apart from the other, therefore, precisely, arises the obligation of the Catholic Church to watch with a mother's eye the training of the young.

But the history of the Catholic Church, from the first moment in which she was sent forth among men by the Voice of Christ, furnishes the most convincing evidence that, next to the Faith, she has ever been the foster mother of science in every department.

It seems truly a superfluous work to undertake to show that the Catholic Church always fostered knowledge, and reckoned among the enemies of her progress ignorance as first and greatest.

But let us appeal to history. Where shall we begin? We find at the very dawn of the monastic life, schools of

learning introduced, in which the monks were the teachers for the surrounding country, wherever they were established. In like manner, the bishop of every diocese had a school in his house in which youth were trained, chiefly, indeed, those who desired to enter the ministry, but at the same time not excluding those who, though in the world, yet desired to pursue the course of studies followed there. These schools, which satisfied the chief wants of the period, and which were much more useful than those of the rhetoricians and grammarians which preceded them, and which were chiefly of a speculative character, sustained and survived the shock which Europe received at the invasion of the barbarians about that time.

It was at that period also, that the celebrated school of Lerins was established in the island of that name. It was known and famous throughout the whole world while it lasted. In it were taught and trained some of the greatest philosophers and the greatest benefactors of the human race.

It will be readily understood that after the invasion of the barbarians, the state of letters was anything but desirable throughout Europe. In fact, civilization at large was threatened with destruction, as far as its human origin and construction were concerned. In this wreck of society, and after the closing of the old pagan schools by the Emperor Justinian, there arose a light in Southern Europe in the establishment of Monte Cassino, which was founded by the great monastic Patriarch, St. Benedict.

From this school hundreds of trained teachers went over the world, giving a new impetus to learning, opening up new avenues of knowledge and a new system of acquiring it. From it, chiefly, sprang Iona, Lindisfarne, York, Fulda, Rheims, Fleury, and Seville.

Among the countries that had a share in reestablishing Christian civilization after the invasion of the Goths and Vandals, Ireland can claim the very largest. At that time the schools of the island were flourishing and known to the world as the best in existence. The scholars and teachers invited the children of every nation to her schools, and

supplied them with books as well as masters. For at least four hundred years, from the seventh to the eleventh centuries, it held the foremost place in the world for the splendid character of its schools. Nor was this all. The scholars and monks of the Irish schools spread themselves over Europe (one or more of them is said even to have come to America), and taught the knowledge of letters, of labor, and arts to the people of the various countries to which they went.

But I shall not trespass too much on your endurance, by citing many more of these historic facts. Let one or two suffice. You know, probably, that of all the schools of England, those that she has been most proud of are Oxford, Cambridge, Winchester, and Eton. These schools were established in the days when the Catholic Faith flourished throughout the land. Oxford and Winchester were founded by a Catholic Bishop; and Eton and Cambridge by the Catholic King Henry VI.

Looking back, then, over the history of letters, and recalling those to whom the human race is indebted, we have no hesitation in saying that the Catholic Church has been, through the incessant labor of her children in every age and generation of the Christian era, the greatest benefactor the world has ever seen.

The Church, therefore, instead of being a foe to knowledge, makes it, after Faith, the chief concern of her life. That her children should be educated, and educated thoroughly, and educated without restriction as far as their circumstances will permit, she desires most heartily. Consequently, you see how very anxious all her bishops and her priests are, throughout the world, that there should be schools in every parish. And this brings up the crucial question. Now comes the parting of the ways between the system of the Catholic Church and other systems of education.

I use the word *system* advisedly and intentionally. Because from what I have stated in the short sketch preceding, you will have seen, and, no doubt, you will be prepared to admit, that the end and object and desire are the same, *viz.*, the acquisition of knowledge and the perfection of man. The method or system only is different. The Catholic Church says emphatically that her system is the best, because it

alone leads man to his end. The advocates of other systems say theirs is the best.

Very well, the Catholic Church says, let us agree to differ. You make use of your system, and try it thoroughly, and I shall make use of mine. Meantime, I am convinced that I am right, and, of course, I cannot violate my conscience. I am *satisfied, perfectly satisfied*, to wait until you have thoroughly tried your system, no matter how long it may be.

Let us ask the reasons why the Catholic Church adopts her system.

In order to see properly why the Catholic Church clings so entirely to her system of education, it is absolutely necessary to know what education is. According to the various prejudices of men, and according to their various theories, this term is used by them in different senses.

According to strict etymology, however, and literally, education means a drawing forth, developing, and refining. So that, taken in its relation to man, it means the drawing forth, developing, training, and refining of the powers and faculties which God has given to man, that thus he may attain his destiny. Now, these faculties and powers can be developed and trained, either totally or only in part. For instance, man, as you know, is composed of a body and soul. The one, or the other, or both may be developed. If you develop only the physical faculties, you may have a fine specimen of an athlete, but you have a very poor specimen of a rational man. You may have in him a beautiful and symmetrical form, but so have you in the grayhound and the Arabian steed. You may have developed great and very remarkable strength, but you have the same in the lion and the elephant. You may have developed great swiftness, but you have the same in the stag.

Again: The rational nature of man has various powers and faculties; these faculties are the understanding, the memory, and the will, which we may denominate under the two heads, intelligence or intellect, and will, the one directed to acquire knowledge, the other to love the good, that is to say, what is good in appearance or in reality. For the will, which is blind unless enlightened by the intelligence, may, and

frequently does, make a mistake about the object which is proposed to it.

Another division which can be made of this subject is, Man is composed of a corporal and spiritual nature; that is to say, of a body and soul. He has this life, as such, in common with the lower order of animals, perishable. His soul is immortal, can never die, and is made for eternal happiness, or must endure eternal misery.

Now, the education of a man may be such as to be bounded by this life, or it may be such as to make this a preparation for the next. This is to say, the object of it may be mere natural science, such as reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, history, geology, etc., and stop there. Or it may include these, and go beyond them, and be also the truths of Faith, those which God has revealed. And even then, there still remains the heart to be trained. And unless the heart is trained and formed to habits of virtue daily and hourly, no matter how much the other faculties have been developed, the work is still imperfect; because without the habit of restraining and purifying the passions, the intellect only opens up before the enlightened gaze of the heart new ways and new means to gratify its untamed desires. For this very reason, the Holy Ghost says, in Sacred Scripture, "Better is a humble rustic who serves God, than a proud philosopher who can trace the course of the stars."

Now, which of these systems would you in your heart of hearts think the best and most advantageous for the pupil and for the society of which he is to form a part, and so integral and so important a part, in so short a time? I fancy I hear you say, Of course I should choose that which brings forth, develops, and makes man perfect. That which takes his every faculty into consideration; his intellect, his heart, his soul; in a word, the whole man.

Very well, then, you must introduce the element of religion, and you must put it in the first place, if you believe in God at all, and the destiny of man. Why is this? For the simple reason that you cannot otherwise train the heart. You cannot train the heart without furnishing it with motives from the moral law. You cannot tell a child to abstain from evil and to do good with any real result, without point-

ing at the same time to the awful sanction which the Deity has given to His precepts. This cannot be done without teaching doctrine. Therefore your system falls.

The consequence of all this is, or ought to be, very plain. In order to train the child or the pupil thoroughly, in order to evoke and develop in the young the perfect man, it is absolutely necessary to have religion, specific and positive, form a primary element in the education which he receives. Even the old pagan nations recognized this as an admitted principle in the education of the young. And to the precepts of religion, such as it was, men to-day, whose judgment deserves to be appreciated, ascribe many of the achievements of their famous men.

These, then, are the relations of the Catholic Church to education. Has she not—with the experience of twenty centuries in her memory, and having endured all that she has in the cause of education as well as religion—a right to speak of what system is the best to make men happy here as well as hereafter?

Tell me where on earth can any more single-hearted patriots be found than those trained in the Christian school, where patriotism is exalted from being merely a natural, civic virtue to the height of a Christian duty, and an obligation from on high?

Tell me where is such evidence of Christian charity, self-sacrifice, and heroism, as is found among our communities, who have been brought up in the Christian schools? The hospitals that stud the land, the history of the Civil War, the history of the yellow fever and the cholera among us, answer this question.

Therefore study this matter well, and without prejudice. It is worthy of serious study. In the conclusion which you shall draw from such study as that will be fully contained the justification for the teaching and educational system of the Catholic Church.



INDIFFERENTISM

WHAT is Indifferentism? What is Latitudinarianism? Indifferentism, as its name sufficiently implies, is that state of mind in which a person is entirely indifferent as to what form of religious belief he adopts. You, no doubt, have frequently heard persons say, "We are all on the same road—we are all going the same way." "It matters very little what road we take, so long as our purpose and object are the same." Latitudinarianism may be described to be a tendency or an inclination to remove the barriers of Truth, and to say that it should compromise with error.

Under these designations the Supreme Authority of the Church has condemned certain errors which have been propagated for the last half century and more. These errors may be classified as follows: 1st, It is lawful and free to embrace and profess that religion which, by the light of reason alone, man shall have considered true. 2d, Men in the worship of any religion whatsoever can find the way of eternal salvation, and finally attain to it. 3d, We must at least have good hope for the eternal salvation of all those who in no way whatsoever belonged to the true Church of Christ. 4th, Protestantism is no other than a different form of the same true Christian religion in which any person may please God equally as in the Catholic Church.

Now those who taught and teach these errors say briefly, All religions are the same; people may be saved in any form of religion; there is no objective or real difference between religious truth and error.

The Church declares that to be false. All religions are not the same; God made one religion in the person of Jesus Christ, and that one is true to the exclusion of all others. If any one is saved out of that, it will be only because he did not know any better, and therefore, in some sense, came

under the influence and within the operation of the graces of the Redemption through Jesus Christ. This makes provision for all who really could have claimed in their favor any title to the goodness and mercy of Almighty God. And this should be plain to every one.

But how about the first statement? All religions are not the same. Are they, or are they not? If all are the same, the Church is wrong; if they are not the same, then the Church is surely right. Let us examine the matter. We may state as admitted already that there are some forms of religion so revolting to people generally that they certainly would not claim equal toleration for them as for others. Take, for instance, Mormonism, or that of the Shakers or other like forms, which so shock us by their grossness or folly as to make it difficult to see how ordinary human beings can accept them. The only explanation being that in "matters of religion, once a person rejects authority, there is no doctrine too absurd to be embraced by the human mind." Certainly, if all religions are the same, then it is quite illogical to exclude the Mormons and the Shakers.

But, perhaps, only the denominations that are called Christian are meant. These should be the same, if any are. Surely the Catholic Church cannot be included in this category. We are well aware that all those denominations which are generally included under the title Christian, and which are not Catholic, if they do not agree otherwise, agree at least in abusing the Catholic Church, and in holding her up before the people whom they influence, as having all the marks of the Apocalyptic Beast, and the Scarlet Woman. So, of course, unless they have changed from this position recently, they must be satisfied to say that the Catholic Church is not the same as any other denomination of the Christian religion, either substantially or accidentally.

We claim to have all those teachings of Christ without error or doubt. We claim to have the plenitude of Apostolic authority and power and jurisdiction, as it existed from the very foundation of the Church. We claim that the inerrancy promised to St. Peter, the first Pope, belongs to our present Pope. We claim that there are seven Sacraments, real operative channels of divine grace. We claim to have a real and

perfect Sacrifice, whereby we honor God, thank Him for His benefits to us, expiate our own sins, and make satisfaction for the penitent dead. We claim this to be the Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

No other Christian denomination has any such characteristics or attributes, and consequently, we are not the same as others. Nor are the others the same among themselves and when compared with one another. Take for instance any two of them. They differ in doctrine. The Episcopalian and the Methodist, the Baptist and the Presbyterian.

It is more than likely that the first would not admit that the others had even the authority of teaching the Gospel at all, as being without Holy Orders, or the apostolic succession. It is very likely that all would disagree about the doctrine of Baptism, Confirmation, services for the dead, and so forth. When ultimately asked for the means of deciding questions of the most important nature, they will refer us to the Bible, the Holy Scriptures, which decide nothing of the kind, and from which, though undoubtedly the Word of God, all the heresies of the Christian religion have been taken by some one who, contrary to the authority of the teaching Church, thought, or at least said, he saw his particular doctrine in that same holy book.

Again, if all religions are the same, what excuse can be given for those who broke away from the Church, tearing her to pieces by their heresies? What excuse can be offered for the leaders of the revolt in the sixteenth century? Can it be possible that they were justified, for some accidental or trifling reason?

The consequences of that revolt and rebellion were fearful to the State, to society, both civil and religious, and to individuals. Churches, convents, monasteries, were pillaged and burned; wars devastated the fairest portions of Europe; and thousands of families were scattered to the winds. All for what? To get rid of a religion which they now would claim to be substantially Christian, like the one they were undertaking to make and introduce.

There is, therefore, and can be, no reason to say that

all Christian denominations are the same; that men have the same chance of salvation in one as in another; that they differ only in form, not in substance.

No. Christ, the Lord, instituted His Church to be one in Faith and one in communion; to be one at all times and places; to be one for all men and under all circumstances; to be one body with one Head; to be one sheepfold under one Shepherd; to be one kingdom governed by one King; one household governed by one Father. He established one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, and consequently, one true Church.

Truth cannot be compromised, no matter what the consequence. Faith cannot be sacrificed to anything conceivable. Charity may be exercised without limit in its application to our neighbors; we may be friends, and live on the best terms and relations of harmony and peace; but one jot or tittle of the truth cannot be denied or compromised for the sake of charity. To impugn the known truth is a sin against the Spirit of God, a sin against the Holy Ghost. Consequently, the Catholic Church, claiming to be the mouth-piece of the Holy Ghost to men, must always make known the truth, and, having made it known, defend it as a matter concerning her very life and existence on earth.

So much for the doctrine of Indifferentism or Latitudinarianism.

SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, SECRET SOCIETIES

It is scarcely necessary for me to say why Socialism and Communism are condemned. The first is a renewal of the pagan society which existed in the days of the Cæsars, when the State was God, and God was the State; when slavery abounded in every walk and grade of life.

The slave was found everywhere. Not only were the menial offices of labor performed by the slave, but the slave was the agriculturist, the mechanic, the merchant, the amanuensis, the teacher. Every father of a family was absolute master of the members of that family, obliged to render an account to no one, even for the disposition of the lives of his wife and children. He was absolute master within his own household.

But further, the master of the slaves, even though he ruled thousands of them, was as much a slave to the State, or, what was the same, to the will of the Emperor, as was the veriest slave to his master. If the Emperor ordered him to die, he might have the doubtful privilege of choosing his own death, but he dared not disobey or dispute the Emperor's orders.

That state of society is Socialism. It is the subordination of the individual to society and the state. The state absorbed the individual, and the individual was of use and considered only in so far as he was a factor of, and contributed to, the welfare of the state.

Consequently, from these premises follows, as a logical consequence, that the individual had no responsibility, and therefore no accountability. The end and purpose of every individual life was entirely the benefit and welfare of the state and society, prescinding altogether from the consideration of the individual.

It was on this account that the very first moment the

Christian religion made any important appearance in the Roman Empire, which was coextensive with geographical knowledge, the Roman Emperors interdicted it, and persecuted it. The principles on which both civilizations were founded and established were completely antagonistic. Therefore there could be no compromise between them. One was bound to destroy the other; and one did ultimately destroy the other. The Christian civilization superseded the pagan, and on the ruins of the latter the former was erected to remain to the end of time.

Now it has been sought, and it is still sought, by some to establish a state of society similar to that which has been described.

Are you prepared for that state? Do you not reject it with all your heart? And if you do, I am sure you have no difficulty in seeing with what justice and propriety Socialism has been condemned by Catholic truth.

If Socialism is an error, if its doctrines are antagonistic to Christian and civilized society, surely, Communism and Anarchism are much more so. It will be quite unnecessary to do more than point out to you the events which took place in Paris in 1870, and in other parts of the world since. The Communists, who, as their name implies, desire to have everything in common, no matter what, and even whether they contribute to the sum total of the treasury or not, are simply a sect who push the false principles of the Socialists to greater length, and, consequently, are more dangerous to the state and to society. Anarchy is the extreme of Socialism and Communism. It is only necessary to state this in order to understand how very desirable it is to point out the dangers with which these sects menace the tranquillity, and even the existence, of civilized and Christian society.

But what shall I say of other clandestine and secret societies? We cannot deny, and we do not at all deny, that the Supreme Authority of the Catholic Church has condemned these associations as a menace to Christian society and to the Christian religion.

What such societies are here in this country I know not. I know not whether they agree in principle and purpose with those of European origin and existence. But this I know—

that if they are one and the same in principles, in purpose, and in operation, they are the most deadly enemies of the Christian faith and the greatest menace to the civilization in which we live.

These secret societies constitute of themselves a religion of their own, with all the rites and ceremonies which go to make up that. They are expected to take, and looked upon as taking, the place of any other distinctive form of religion. At one time a daily paper chronicled a gathering of the Masonic Society, in which one of the most distinguished men of the country declared that no other society could approach the Catholic Church in its organization and importance, and that it was destined to supersede it!

These societies have a liturgy or ritual of some kind. Their officers are named like those who constitute a religious body. For instance, we notice that one is called the "High Priest." That is a distinctively religious name. Some use wine and oil at their meetings and celebrations. In Europe they even go through a parody of the Sacrifice of the Mass as it is celebrated in the Catholic Church, while not at all concealing their animus of hostility to that Faith.

These societies call their places of meeting *temples*. Why *temples*, indeed, unless they are places of worship? They are not supposed to be *Christian* temples, for every one of *every faith* and of *no faith at all* is welcome as a member if he fulfil the conditions, and take part in the ceremonies, whatever they may be.

Now just as there are outside the pale of the Church many who are in good faith and striving to live well with all their might and main, so there are many associated with these societies who are really in good faith, that is to say, well-disposed, and who think that in these societies they are furnished with and possess all the religion they require.

But who does not know that there are various degrees in these societies? And that only certain and comparatively few individuals attain to the high honor of the last degree, and consequently, there are comparatively few among the brethren who are allowed to attain a knowledge of the ultimate aim and object of these secret associations?

The utter incompatibility that exists between the principles which govern these societies and those which constitute the basis of Catholic teaching, is shown in the conversion of a certain gentleman of prominence, who had already ascended to the thirty-third degree of Masonry. Consequently, he knew all that might be known on this side of the ocean, or nearly all. But did it satisfy his craving for religion? No. He came down every one of those steps before he postulated for admission into the true fold of the Catholic Church. Thus, with a knowledge of both, he manifested in himself the impossibility of reconciling the truths of the Christian religion with the principles of the society to which he belonged.

Can it be surprising, that the sovereign authority of the Christian Church should point out to the faithful and warn them against these societies, which by their very constitution menace the life of the Christian Faith?

The Church never does anything that she cannot justify, and though she may regret to have to perform a task apparently so severe as to condemn a society which numbers so many members, yet, because she is the guardian of the Faith of Christ, and cannot lay down her trust, she must, as a condition of her existence, condemn it as dangerous when she knows it to be so.

But, some will tell you: "The Church is not a true and perfect society, entirely free; nor does it possess, among its own proper and constant rights conferred on it by its divine Founder, the power of defining what are its own rights and the limits within which it may exercise these rights; but, rather, it is the province of the civil power to define them." And again, "The ecclesiastical power ought not to exercise its authority without the permission and assent of the civil government."

The Church condemns the first of these propositions for a very evident reason. If she were not a true and perfect society, independent of the action of the State as such, it would necessarily follow that she would be different in different states. One state and government would define her rights and limits in one way, another would define them in another way. One would grant so many rights and so much

liberty, another, according to its constitution or caprice, would restrict both in a totally different manner.

So that the consequence would be, that the Church, instead of being Catholic, as she is, would be merely national, and could not possibly be the one and only true Church, which she claims to be, for all men, for all nations, for all governments, for all times to the end of the world.

2d, the Church has never recognized that the permission or consent of the civil government was necessary in order that she should exercise her merely ecclesiastical or spiritual authority. If she could do that, she would put an end to her existence immediately.

Her mission here is to save the souls of men, and as that is the highest and most glorious office of any society or of any individual, in fact, the only one that should seriously concern us at all, it follows that she cannot allow any obstacle to lie in her path to that end. If the state commands her one way, while God Almighty commands her in an opposite direction, she must always say with the Apostle, in the same circumstances, "God must be obeyed rather than men."

If the Apostles had not followed and obeyed implicitly that first principle of Christian theology, the Roman Empire would never have received the Faith, for everywhere they were confronted, not only by such prohibitions, but even by much worse, by persecutions. Where in history has any one ever read that the Church of God ever regarded such a principle as the one to be adopted? From this the Primacy of the Apostolic See has always been taught as belonging to the very Constitution of the Church.

Every one knows that a merely national church is not Catholic, and consequently, the Church must condemn a proposition which would aim at destroying one of the chief marks which point her out to mankind as coming from the hands of God.

PART IV
ADDRESSES

IRELAND IN ITS CHRISTIAN ASPECT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CIVILIZATION

ADDRESS FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY

IF THERE is a nation in modern days which pre-eminently, and I might say closely, resembles the scattered race of Israel, that nation is the one whose Christian character we are going to review herewith, and the influence of which on the civilization of the world I purpose putting before you in the best manner I am able.

Alike in this, that, though originally the inheritors of a comparatively small portion of the earth, they are both found now in every region of the globe: alike in their scattered fortunes, in their distinct nationality, they are still more alike in the simple attachment with which they preserve the traditions of their respective races, and in the affection (second to the love of God alone) with which they regard their respective nations.

It is this attachment, this love, which draws them together, over the world, on their recurring national festivals, and while in the one case their sorrow of exile is manifested in the sad silence in which, the Scripture tells us, the Jews celebrated their captivity when they strung their harps on the willow boughs, and, seated by the rivers of Babylon, wept as they recollected Sion, in the other the strains of sad music bring back the hallowed memories of bygone days to a disinherited people. The Hebrew captive asked himself how could he sing in the land of the stranger; but the Irish exile realizes the words of his national poet:

The stranger shall hear thee lament on his plains,
Every sigh of thy harp shall be sent o'er the deep,
Till thy masters themselves, as they rivet thy chains,
Shall pause at the song of their captive, and weep.

To continue the contrast: there seems to be a religious character in the eventful history and the varied fortunes of both peoples, but of a distinct kind, and with opposite results, for while the ancient people of God have been made wanderers on the earth, in punishment of their infidelity to God and their rejection of the Messiah, and while their dispersion is unproductive of any benefit to their belief, the ubiquitous Irishman, as far as he is representative of his nation, not only preserves his proverbial love for his Faith, but seems to have a special mission to herald its glad tidings to almost every nation in the world. I do not want to enter into the question whether in God's providence the world-wide dispersion of the Irish race has been a special dispensation, or whether Almighty God, for His own wise ends, seems to have willed the loss of their own national autonomy, in order that they might the more effectually influence the spiritual interest of other countries; but this I will say, that Ireland has always been, since she received the Faith, a missionary country *par excellence*, and viewing our fortune (or as some may call it, our misfortune) as an established fact, the dispersion of our race has served to develop this feature in a very marked way. It is bound up with the brightest pages in the history of Christianity, the preservation of morals and literary culture, and, therefore, of true civilization throughout the earth. This proposition or assertion may seem to some, who are accustomed to judge of us simply from their knowledge of individuals of our countrymen, as very strange. The Irishman as an individual is looked on generally as behind others in the knowledge of those things which constitute a civilized society, but it is only an uneducated individual himself, or a man of narrow mind and much prejudice, who would attempt to predicate this of the Irish as a nation. This, however, is not the point of our subject, for whatever the present condition of the Irish people with regard to true progress and social culture, it is certainly a fact of history which cannot be questioned, that everything possible was done by the rulers of our country for many years to reduce our ancestors to the level of irrational beings (how they escaped is a wonder); and, on the other hand, I say that it is as certainly a fact of history

that the deep-rooted faith of the Irish and their dispersion have both been productive of the most beneficial results toward the civilization of mankind.

This proposition I intend to demonstrate during the course of this lecture. I solicit your attention to the facts I shall put before you, and assure you that I shall make no assertion that is not authenticated by historic evidence of an undoubted character. Before I address myself to the subject, I think it best to complete the comparison I have drawn between the Hebrew people and the fortunes of the Irish race, by observing that, though the former live in the vain hope of having their lost fortunes restored to them, the latter have every reason to hope from the course which events have recently assumed, that they may yet see the restoration of their national independence, and, having done her duty as a missionary nation, "Erin's gay jubilee may shine out yet."

The subject of my address to you, my dear friends, is, as you probably have seen, "Ireland in its Christian Aspect," and therefore you will immediately see that my object is not to pander to national prejudices or pride, which are only too often made use of by political tricksters for their own ends; nor is it to embitter your feelings in any way against any nation or people. With this I have nothing to do.

My object now is a far higher one, however unequal I may be to the task. It is to place before you the greatest glory which our race possesses, and which any people can desire; that is, a solid, permanent, uncompromising Christian character. A character of singular interest in the knowledge and desire of the supernatural, which made the conversion of Ireland to Christianity so bloodless, so immediate, and so universal; a character of a love of truth and deep religious instinct, which rendered it impossible for heresy or religious error to spring up or to gain any national footing when adventitious or foreign in our land; a character of Christian zeal with which Ireland was inflamed to make known the truth she possessed; a character of Christian fortitude the most heroic, unequalled, perhaps, in the world, by which, through good and evil report, in prosperity and adversity, Ireland preserved her faith; a character, in fine,

of most exalted Christian charity, by which, perhaps, as perfectly as any nation, she manifested the truth of God, by which, in the very midst of her sufferings, and still more when her tears were partially wiped away, she undertook the glorious work of bringing back even her own torturers to the truth and Faith which they had wilfully lost.

Ah, my friends, here indeed is a glorious aspect of our country; here is a bright, a rich tint, in the picture of our country, darkened by adversity; here is a mellow light which brings forth its brightest traits, and makes it unique among the nations of the earth.

It is to exhibit this picture to your view that I appear before you; to tell you what our country has done for the welfare of mankind; and let me hope not to produce the mere complacency of vain pride, but to perpetuate, so far as you are concerned, the Christian character for which our common Catholic country has always been remarkable.

I know, to be sure, that the subject is a very exalted one, and it has been the subject of choice composition for some of the greatest men of the past, so it would justly claim abilities to deal with it now to which I cannot lay claim. Yet, conscious that I have earnestly and studiously endeavored to prepare it (and, let me say, with some share of labor), I indulge the hope that you will "take the will for the deed," and that your interest in the subject itself will supply any deficiency in the treatment it will receive at my hands.

In speaking of the introduction of Christianity into Ireland, and before giving a sketch of St. Patrick's life, with which it is identified, and whom it would be certainly wrong to pass over in silence on this, his feast-day, it may be well to remark that at the dawn of the fifth century a great portion of the then known world had become Christian. The empire of ancient Rome extended north and south, east and west, and in every country within its vast compass Christian missionaries preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus were the greatness of empire and the riches of worldly commerce made subservient to the designs of an all-wise Providence. Rome itself, the stronghold of paganism, had been made the center and citadel of Christianity. The imperial

court had been transferred by Constantine to New Rome, or Constantinople, and the Sovereign Pontiff became ruler in Rome. There were countries, however, in Europe, that had never been conquered by the Roman Eagle, and, consequently, were almost entirely outside of the range of communication with her people. It was through this lack of intercommunication that we find Christianity appearing so late in the western countries.

Ireland is one of the countries of which I speak, and though so closely situated to Britain and Gaul, which were both portions of the Roman Empire, it was never brought into subjection. The inhabitants were idolaters, like all the old pagan nations, and had never received intelligence of a Redeemer, except, perhaps, incidentally from some Roman trader who came to their ports in order to exchange his goods for the products of the country.

At the beginning of the fifth century, however, we are told by St. Prosper that Palladius was the first Bishop consecrated for the Irish mission; but we also know that his mission, from whatever cause, was a signal failure. To St. Patrick belongs the merit of preaching the Gospel to the Irish nation, and as a learned prelate (Archbishop Manning) remarks, his labors were so fruitful as to place him next to St. Peter in this respect in the Apostolate.

Various countries have claimed the honor of being the birthplace of the Apostle of Ireland. The authority of recent writers, however, causes it to be a matter of general belief now that he was born in Boulogne-sur-Mer, a town in Picardy in France, about A. D. 387.

Very little is recorded of the earlier life of the saint, except that when about sixteen years old he was taken captive by Niall of the Nine Hostages, an Irish prince who ravaged the coasts of Britain and Gaul. On their arrival in Ireland, Patrick was sold as a slave to Milcho, an inhabitant of County Antrim. By this cruel master the exiled youth was engaged to herd sheep or swine, and in this capacity served six years of captivity.

Thus, by an all-wise Providence, which works good out of evil, it was disposed that the future Apostle of Ireland should prepare in hardship for the labors of his future life.

Cast among the Irish people, he happily acquired a knowledge of their language and customs; torn from his parents and friends, he learned to trust in God alone, and to seek at His hands directly the lessons of wisdom and of love which he was denied elsewhere. The manner of life which he practiced on the mountain tops of Antrim was so extraordinary as to make it approach a fable in description. The Confessions which he wrote thus allude to it: "While tending the flocks I prayed frequently during the day; the love and fear of God advanced in me more and more, and His faith and spirit increased in me, so that I prayed a hundred times in the day, and almost as often in the night . . . I arose before the morning dawn to pray amid the snow, the frost and the rain, and I suffered not any injury in consequence; neither did sloth in any way retard me."

Behold, my friends, how the Apostle of Ireland prepared himself, though unconsciously, for his work. What an example of a Christian life, even in the humble capacity of a slave. After about six years in this kind of life, Patrick escaped from captivity, and returned to France in a vessel which he found, fortunately, on the coast of Ireland.

When he obtained his freedom, he turned his attention to his education, which had been so long neglected; he went to the Seminary of Tours, conducted at the time by his relative, St. Martin (Bishop of Tours), and spent four years there. It was about this time it was said he had been made captive a second time, but regained his liberty on the sixteenth night. His Confessions relate a vision which he had about this time also. In fact, he seems to have been continually haunted with the recollections of the Irish pagans, and with a desire to bring the Faith to them. On this special occasion, the innocent babes of the country in which he had been a slave seemed to hold out their little arms to him, and to cry to him, "Dear Christian child, return among us; return to save us."

Acting on the advice of St. Germanus, he spent nine years more in study and retirement in the great monastic sanctuaries of Marmontier and Lerins. After the completion of his studies he was sent to Rome with recommendations of his fitness for the mission on which he longed to

enter. St. Celestine was Pope at the time, and received him with every mark of respect and affection, and heard with much interest all he had to tell him of the Irish nation. News having been received of the failure of the mission of Palladius, Patrick was immediately consecrated, and having received the necessary authority and apostolic benediction, he set out on his journey. After a long and dreary voyage, such a one as we can have no conception of in these days, Patrick landed on the coast of Wicklow some time before Easter, A. D. 432.

After spending some time here, he embarked for the north of Ireland, landed in Down, and here erected the first temple to the living God. This was the first of that series of churches which the Irish people built during fourteen hundred years, out of their riches and their poverty. Easter time was now at hand. It occurred at the same period of the year in which the council of delegates from the different provinces was to be held at Tara. Patrick conceived the happy, though adventurous design of storming paganism at its very center, and therefore repaired to Tara, determining to celebrate Easter within a short distance of it. During the national festival, in accordance with some Druidical superstition, no fire could be lighted throughout the land under pain of death, until one had been first kindled at the royal palace.

The saint, however, was not cowardly, and carrying out a pious custom prevailing at the time in some Christian communities, lighted a fire to commemorate the Resurrection of Our Lord, as it was Easter Day.

When the Druid priests saw the light, they immediately threatened destruction to the nation unless the criminal would be punished, and Patrick was accordingly summoned to the king's presence. But when the king heard what Patrick had to say, that he had come a long distance, with much hardship, to serve the people of Ireland; that his only reward for giving his life to their welfare would be the joy he would have in promoting the honor of the true and living God, and in begetting children to Jesus Christ—when the king heard this he was struck with his disinterestedness, his fearless courage, his evident sincerity, and the beauty of the Chris-

tian doctrine, and invited him to appear next day before the national council.

Patrick, exulting with joy, and burning with Christian zeal, appeared, and preached to the assembled chiefs the doctrines of Jesus Christ. Many of them forthwith confessed the name of Christ, and received the Sacrament of Baptism at the hands of the saint.

Thus was begun the conversion of the Irish nation. Patrick received the king's sanction to preach throughout the nation. I shall not weary you by detailing his labors. It will be sufficient for me to say that an infallible success attended him wherever he went. North and south, east and west, before his raised crucifix, idolatry fell prostrate, never, never to appear again in Ireland. Everywhere churches were built, and soon the whole island was Christian.

This was the origin of Christianity in Ireland, and now we turn our attention to the aspect of Christian Ireland, or, if you will, to the "Christian Aspect of Ireland." What were the distinctive results of Patrick's labors? What were the characteristics of the Christians of Ireland, which individualized them among the Christian nations of the world? (I speak now of them as regards their own personal national character.)

The first feature which attracts our notice is the fact that it is the only country in the world ever converted to the faith of Christ without having to pass through the ordeal of shedding blood. It seemed almost a matter of course for the Irish to embrace the truths of Christianity when they heard them preached. No one ever suffered death among them because he wished to become a Christian, and the only drop of blood ever spilled was on the occasion of the baptism of the King of Cashel (or his son), who, when St. Patrick's crosier was placed on his foot through mistake, never for a moment remarked the circumstance, even though the blood flowed from the wound. And when the saint apologized to him, and asked him why he did not make it known, he simply answered that he thought it was a part of the ceremony, demonstrating thereby his ardent desire to become a Christian. There is nothing like this, I say, in the conversion of any other country. All others were almost baptized

in their own blood; but, to use the words of the celebrated scholar and historian (Count de Montalembert), "Ireland, that virgin island on which proconsul never set foot, which never knew either the orgies or the exactions of Rome, was also the only place in the world of which the Gospel took possession without bloodshed."

The second characteristic of this new Christian country is that it became entirely Christian from Antrim to Cape Clear, and from the Arran Isles to Dublin Bay, in the short space of thirty-three years. Other nations received the Faith gradually, and through the apostleship of different and successive missionaries, but Ireland became almost entirely Catholic in the lifetime of its Apostle. Christianity was embraced by all; the king, the noble, the bard, the warrior and the peasant vied with one another in the practice of Faith. To use the words of the historian I have already quoted, who only narrates facts of history, "The kings, chiefs, and people of green Erin listened to the Apostle, followed him, and testified toward him that impassioned veneration which has become the most popular tradition of the Irish, and which fourteen centuries have not lessened. After thirty-three years of apostleship, he died, leaving Ireland almost entirely converted."

The third characteristic of Christian Ireland was the ardor of its Faith, the vitality of its inner sanctity, the heroism of virtue which it manifested. The people of other countries, after their conversion to Christianity, contented themselves, as nations generally, with the observance of the precepts of the Gospel; but the children of the Irish aspired to the summit of the Christian life. They embraced in thousands those counsels of our divine Lord which He left to the choice of every individual. The king laid down his crown, the warrior hung up his sword, in the sanctuary; the bard, who sang in long epics the praises of Celtic kings and heroes, now attuned his harp to the melodies of Christian song, and the praises of the living God. "When once blessed and transformed (says an old author), the songs of the ancient bards became so sweet that the angels of God leant down from heaven to listen to them." The maiden gave up her worldly prospects, and dedicated herself, a virgin spouse,

to Jesus Christ. Monasteries and convents of both sexes arose throughout the land, and we are told by history that "Even in his own life St. Patrick was astonished to find that he could no longer number the sons and daughters of chieftains who had embraced lives of celibacy at his bidding." Yes, my friends, in the evidence of faith, Ireland was unsurpassed. Who has not heard of Bangor, with its six thousand monks? Of Lismore? Of Clonmacnoise? Of Clonfert? Of Clonard? Of Armagh? And of so many other religious houses, which historians tell us were like towns because of the number of their religious? Who has not heard of the countless thousands of virgins who became spiritual children of St. Brigid? And when Brigid, who was called the "Mary of Ireland," died in the monastery which she founded, upon her tomb a light was enkindled which her nuns kept burning, and which for a thousand years was never extinguished, but regarded as the signal light of the country, until the sacrilegious hands of the sixteenth century tore it away. That light, of which our national poet has written,

Like the bright light that shone in Kildare's holy fane,
And burned through long ages of darkness and storm,
Erin! Oh, Erin! Thus bright through the tears
Of a long night of bondage, thy spirit appears.

To this illustrious saint innumerable convents of women trace their origin; and when the inhabitants of our country were prevented by alien rulers from erecting churches in her honor, then did Irish parents give their children her name, that they might thus perpetuate a memory dear to every Irish Christian.

Behold, my friends, this other trait of Christian Ireland. Her Faith became the theme of nations. Her monasteries, though counted by hundreds, were crowded with inmates, and her churches filled with daily worshipers. Like the rising sun, she increased in splendor as she advanced; the number of her children and her saints became synonymous; she begot a patron for every district, and almost for every hamlet, until she became known throughout the world by the glorious title of "Isle of Saints."

Children of Ireland, have you ever seriously reflected

on your origin? That you are the descendants of a "chosen people," the children of a "holy nation"? Have you ever thought, as you traversed the green turf, that beneath your every step were the hallowed ashes of some saint? Did it ever occur to you, as you climbed your native hills, or sauntered along the valleys, that their echo was once a continued response to the sacred songs of the solitary? Oh! Remember the days of old and the generations that have passed away, and if ever the world should offer you anything in exchange for your duty to God, put the glorious example of your forefathers before your mind, and let God be your choice!

Nor were these monasteries schools of piety alone. They were the nurseries of civilization in every department. "In these vast monastic cities" (says one historian) "there was also trained an entire population of philosophers, of writers, of architects, of carvers, of painters, of calligraphers, of musicians, poets, and historians, but above all, of missionaries," and thus, he adds, "sprung up armies of saints, who were more numerous, more national, and it must be added, more extraordinary, in Ireland than in any other Christian land."

It is told of one of these monks who was at the same time a bishop, that he passed his nights in transcribing manuscripts, and his leisure hours by day in carving in iron and copper. Three hundred transcriptions of the Gospels are attributed to him.

"There was an intellectual development which the hermits of Egypt had not known. The Irish communities entered into rivalry with the great monastic schools of Gaul. They explained Ovid there; they copied Virgil; they devoted themselves especially to Greek literature; they drew back from no inquiry, from no discussion; they gloried in placing boldness on a level with faith." (Montalembert, Vol. II, p. 396.)

Music was also a favorite accomplishment among the monks, who used its sweet sounds to turn men's hearts to God. It was this love and cultivation of the sciences which, by the consent of Christendom, merited for Ireland the title of "the Isle of Learned," as well as saintly children.

Hence, my friends, if our country has been accused of ignorance, let those who are so barefaced as to make the charge remember these historic facts. Let them not forget that if such were the case it must be ascribed to some other cause than a want of interest or a lack of desire for knowledge; let them not pass over the days of our independence, when we had an opportunity to cultivate and to develop the great genius of our people, and when we gave an example to Europe of the ability of our race, as well as our love for learning.

Gerald Griffin, the well-known poet, has consecrated the memory of these happy days in a sweet poem, a few stanzas of which I shall ask your permission to read, as it will give a far better idea of these times than anything I can say:

'Twas the Garden of Christendom tended with care,
 Every flow'ret of Eden grew peacefully there;
 When the fire of the Spoiler in Lombardy blazed,
 And the Moslemin shout in the desert was raised,
 And high o'er the wreck of a fear-stricken world,
 The standard of hell to the winds was unfurled,
Faith, bleeding, retired to the land of the West,
 And with *Science*, her handmaid, found shelter and rest.

With a warm burst of welcome that shelter was given,
 Her breast opened wide to the Envoy of heaven
 In the screen of her bowers was the stranger concealed
 Till her pantings were hushed, and her bruises were healed.

In the depth of our glen were her secrets adored,
 And our mountain shone out in the light of the Lord.

Ye ivy-clad relics, resounding no more
 With the swell of the anthem from shore unto shore,
 Ye crags of the ocean, ye caves in whose gloom
 The Saint found a home, and the Martyr a tomb,

Ye speak of the time when the cells of the West
 Gave voice after voice to the choirs of the blest.

When the Church of the Isles saw her glories arise
 Columba, the Dove-like, and Carthage the Wise,
 And the School and the Temple gave light to each shore
 From elifted Iona to wooded Lismore.

This was another feature of Ireland's Christianity. A glorious evidence of the vitality of her Faith from the fifth

century for centuries afterwards; until she became subject to foreign rule she was the home of the arts and sciences, as well as the virtues of the Gospel. And though she lost the one by the tyranny of her rulers, she would never forfeit the other. She was robbed of the former, for though it was a feature of Christianity, yet it was of human growth; but the latter, Faith, was a divine gift, and with that she would never part.

This brings us, my friends, to the fourth characteristic of the Christian aspect of Ireland, *viz.*, her undying attachment to it, her fortitude in resisting every attempt to injure it or deprive her of it.

It is said that when about to die, St. Patrick went to the top of a neighboring mountain (Cruachan Eli) and asked for fidelity to the Faith for the Irish people. Whether this is a fact, and whether the prayer of the saint was heard or not, it is a fact of history that Ireland has not only preserved her Faith, but there was never known a heresy to spring up within her bosom. Whatever heresy was in Ireland was always from other countries, and even that never got much footing in the land. So that at all times might be said what St. Columbanus wrote to the Pope of his time, that there never was an error taught among the children of Ireland. Yes, from the moment that Ireland had seen the sun of Faith rise upon her, she had vowed herself to it with an ardor and tender devotion which became her very life. The course of ages has not interrupted this; the most bloody and implacable of persecutions has not shaken it; the defection of all northern Europe has not led her astray; and she maintains still, amid the splendors and miseries of modern civilizations and Saxon supremacy, an inextinguishable center of Faith, where survives, along with the completest orthodoxy, that admirable purity of manners which no conqueror and no adversary has ever been able to dispute, to equal, or to diminish.

Who is it who has not heard of the perpetuity of Ireland's Faith, the fidelity of her children? Who is ignorant of the fortitude with which she drained, even to the last drop, the bitter chalice of her sufferings, rather than forfeit her Faith for a moment? Her Christian fortitude was proof

against the greatest power of her sanguinary foes. Who has not read the tale of the last three centuries? Which of you, children of Ireland, has turned over the blood-stained pages without emotion and horror? Oh, did the spirits of your martyred fathers speak, they could chill the very life-blood in your veins by the recital of their sufferings. They could tell you how their persecutors, having forsworn their own allegiance to the See of Peter, and bartered the Faith of Augustine for the gratification of passion, would fain make us also partners in the impious deed. How they strained every nerve and tried every means which human ingenuity could invent or the spirit of hatred suggest to root from our hearts our cherished love for Patrick and for Rome. They proscribed our religion in our own land. They appropriated or destroyed the produce of our fertile country. They ransacked our cities and our towns. Our streets ran red with the blood of their martyred inhabitants. "Our inheritance was given to aliens, and our houses to strangers. The tongue of the suckling babe cleaved to the roof of its mouth for thirst; the little ones cried for bread, and there was none that would give it to them." They put a price on the head of our "Soggarth Aroon," and murdered him at the altar-step. They banished schools and learning from the land, and then taunted us with ignorance. They robbed our shrines of their sacred relics; they plundered our monasteries and convents; they treated their harmless inmates with the most inhuman barbarity; they trampled on the image of our crucified Saviour in our churches; they tore down their sacred paintings, and threw them into stables and brothels. They extinguished the lamp in the sanctuary and "scattered the stones thereof at the top of every street." And, crime of crimes! They ascended the altar, and more sacrilegiously than Core and Dathan, tore open the Tabernacle, dragged forth the Son of the Eternal, and like the Jews of old held Him up to the scoffing gaze of their impious companions, there, in the church of God, where the "clean oblation" had been so frequently offered; where the pastor fed his flock with the "Bread of angels," and the people prayed in the fervor of their simple piety! There, I say, was heard nothing but the neighing of horses, the curses of heretics, the

clamors and yells of murderous soldiery mingled with the dying groans of a faithful people. There were taverns instead of altars, blasphemies instead of prayers, and the howling of drunkards (like Baltazar of old) polluting the sacred vessels in their revels, instead of hymns of praise to God. Oh, Ireland, faithful Ireland! Those were indeed the days of sad affliction when thy pastors wept for thy lost children; when thy Bishops mourned over thy fallen beauty like Jeremias over Jerusalem. Truly might be applied to thee the plaintive words of that holy Prophet: "Great as the sea is thy destruction . . . Thus thy adversaries are become thy lords, thy children are led into captivity before the face of thy oppressor. Thy enemies have hissed and gnashed with the teeth against thee, and have said . . . Lo, this is the day which we have looked for; we have found it, we have seen it."

Yes, thy enemies thought, in the pride of their foolish hearts, that, after years of systematic persecution of every kind, thy destruction had at length come; they thought that the rack and the gibbet could undo the work of thy glorious Apostle; they thought thy Faith was receiving a death-blow as the bones of thy children were whitening on the rocks and in the caves; but how vain are the judgments of men!

He, who, in the decline of his life, ascended Cruachan to pray for thy perseverance in the faith, was now before the throne of the Eternal asking for the strength to resist thy enemies; the spirit of Patrick hovered around thee, encouraged thee in the fierce struggle, and exulted in thy glorious victory. Oh, Ireland, faithful Ireland! Well may thy children boast of thee! Well may they look with pride on the purity and the perpetuity of thy Faith, and on thy fidelity to the See of Peter and to the teaching of Patrick! Well may they love to wear the shamrock and press it with ardor to their hearts to-day, as they look back over fourteen hundred years and remember that the Faith of him whose memory it renews is this moment as fresh and green among them as the leaves which expand on its tiny stem!

Children of a martyred, faithful nation, do not forget your sacred trust. Cherish more and more the testament your fathers gave you, sealed in their blood. Thank God for

His mercies to you, for remember, "He has not done so to every nation."

Look around over the earth, and see if you can find a similar proof of His special favor. Can you trace the footsteps of Cyprian and Augustine in Carthage and Hippo? Has not Antioch forgotten the names of Sts. Peter and Mark? Where is the illustrious Church of Byzantium? Go along the Danube, and see if amid the darkness of rationalism and infidelity you can recognize the light of the Gospel. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark have yielded to the inroads of heresy.

Ireland, faithful in prosperity and adversity, stands forth in almost solitary glory, renewing, even as I speak, the vigor of her youth. She witnessed the rising splendor of Canterbury and York, and mourned, sister-like, over their destruction. She watched the dying flicker of England's Faith. She wept for its extinction, and lives and rejoices to-day to fan its new-born flame. Who, my friends, can look on such wonderful preservation, such fortitude, without exclaiming, "The finger of God is here!" Who can deny that her cause was truth and her strength superhuman, when, writhing in torture, she still defied the threats of her powerful enemies? Yes, glorious in her early life, glorious in her sufferings, she is still more glorious in her great triumph. The chains were scarcely removed from her hands by her illustrious son (O'Connell) when her first work of thanksgiving was to raise the fallen monuments of her Faith.

Her wounds were yet bleeding when her convents and monasteries arose with marvellous rapidity. Her colleges and seminaries to-day rival in number, and her churches equal in magnificence, those of her palmiest days. Behold, my friends, a glorious trait in the character of Christian Ireland. A fortitude, a persevering love of faith unknown to any nation in the world. A perpetuity of faith, unbroken even by a moment's forgetfulness of her duty and her God.

I have now, my friends, reviewed Ireland in its Christian aspect. I have detained you, I fear, perhaps too long on this part, but you know I am an Irishman, and if there is anything I glory in, it is this Christian character of my

country. You must therefore pardon me if I have dwelt on it longer than usual, perhaps; besides, you are, I dare say, almost all of the same original nationality, and hence I shall presume on your good will.

I shall not detain you very much longer. The second part of the lecture might well fill volumes if treated as it deserves, but as the time has been already prolonged so much, I shall endeavor to compress what I have to say into as narrow a compass as possible.

What influence has Ireland had on civilization? This is the question which the second part of our lecture proposes. And the answer we give to it is that so great was the influence of Ireland in advancing it that for six centuries it was its chief protectress in Europe, and to the untiring labors of the Irish it owes its present existence in a great measure.

Ah, yes, when ungrateful England would accuse us of ignorance, she forgets what she owes us. She forgets that her own historian (Venerable Bede) tells us that it was the greatest pride of a Saxon youth to be able to say he was educated in Ireland. She forgets that Ireland's lamp of science was foremost in lighting Europe through the night of the Middle Ages, and that it is owing to her knowledge and her fidelity in preserving it that all science did not disappear beneath the banner of the Mussulman, and in the carnage with which the Goths and Vandals and Huns filled all Europe.

St. Bernard says of the Irish saints and scholars who went forth as missionaries that "they went forth like bees from a hive." And Benedict XIV says that to them almost all Europe owes the revival of Christianity and letters.

What historian is ignorant of the labors of St. Columbanus along the Rhine and the Alps? This extraordinary missionary left his own country for the salvation and instruction of others, and settled down at the foot of the Vosges, and on the ruins of the pagan civilization of Burgundy and Rome built the great monastic metropolis of Luxeuil. In a short time the number of his children increased to hundreds, and he built various houses in those forests which before his arrival were inhabited only by wild beasts (since the barbarian invasion) and these he and his children ren-

dered fruitful by cultivation. And a historian, writing on St. Columbanus, says, "It is due to this excessive labor that the half of France and of ungrateful Europe has been restored to cultivation."

The Christian courage of Columbanus in rebuking the morals even of kings and princes, as well as the care he took that his disciples should be instructed, not only in habits of virtue, but also in science and art, were well known in those countries which he evangelized.

Having founded various schools in the valley of the Vosges, he crossed to northern Italy, and between Genoa and Milan established the famous monastery of Bobbio, which was for a long time the light of northern Italy. So great was his love of literature that it is recorded in his life that in his sixty-eighth year he addressed a letter in Adonic verse to a friend of his, a letter which throughout bears the mark of classic recollection so peculiar to those times. But I cannot enumerate in detail all the great works of this remarkable saint toward civilizing the Frank, the Slave and the Savoyard. Suffice it therefore to say that his name is a household word in those countries, that his spiritual children were almost beyond counting, and that to them and their efforts, and therefore primarily to him, is due the revival of letters among their people.

Again, we have only to cross into Switzerland, and we find another Irish missionary whom the Swiss venerate today as one of the greatest benefactors of their country. To St. Gall and St. Cotaldus they in a great measure owe their faith and knowledge. We find also that St. Kilian and St. Romuald and St. Boniface carried the lamp of Faith and of Science throughout northern Germany.

In fact there are obscure towns in the heart of and throughout Europe where churches have been built in honor of some Irish saint, who in those days preached the Gospel to their people and instructed them in secular knowledge. And down in the center of Italy two Irishmen founded and became professors in the world-famed University of Pavia, which was such a nursery of learned men.

From Cologne on the Rhine to Seville in Spain you find the name of Brigid revered, and you hear of some of the great

efforts which her spiritual children made to transplant that purity of morals for which Ireland was always, and is still, so remarkable.

And then, leaving the Continent, and crossing through the Netherlands, we have traces of other Irish saints, as remarkable as were those of whom we have spoken. In Northern France we find the tomb of St. Feargall (Farrel), or Virgilius, as he was called. He was so learned that King Pepin invited him to his court in the eighth century. He died Bishop of Salisbury, leaving an example of piety, and no rival in knowledge.

But, perhaps, among the nations of Europe, England and Scotland and Wales owe nothing to the charity and the learning of Ireland? Yes, even the soil of England was fertilized by the labors of Irishmen. To England we gave St. Aidan and St. Finian, and to them were some of her kings indebted for the introduction of science in their kingdoms. St. Cadoc, who founded the great monastery of Carnarvon, was given by his royal father to the care of Irish monks, who had crossed over to Wales, in order that he might, as a historian says, "Be instructed in divine knowledge and in the knowledge of letters." And so much did he prize his training, and so little opportunity of education had he at home, that he went, later, to the celebrated school of Lismore, and spent three years there.

In Scotland the name of Columba or Columbkille is connected with the origin of Christianity. From Cloanard, Ireland sent this "Dove of the Cell" (Columbkille) to Caledonia, and to him it owes, together with the Christian Faith (which it has long since betrayed), also the spread of knowledge. Columba was a descendant of the royal house of O'Neill, of a superior cordiality of manner and dignity of person. He founded many monasteries and Christian schools among the Caledonians.

Behold, then, my friends, what Ireland did in the days of her independence for the civilization of the world. Behold her influence on the nations of Europe. We are told, also, that the example of the sailor saint (Brendan) as well as the sweet sounds of an epic poem which he composed, turned westward the thoughts of Columbus in 1492, and in-

duced him to think that undiscovered land lay in that direction.

The following is an incomplete list of monasteries and schools given by an ancient writer, founded on the continent of Europe by Irish monks: In Scotland, thirteen; in England, twelve; in France, seven; in Armorica, twelve; in Lorraine, seven; in Alsace, ten; in Bavaria, sixteen; in Allemania, fifteen (that is, in Rhetia and Germany).

And the following is a list of the saints of Irish origin, whom the devotion and gratitude of the nations converted by them placed on their altars as patrons, and in many cases whose relics are preserved in their churches:

One hundred and fifty in Germany, thirty-six of whom were martyrs; forty-five in France, six of whom were martyrs; thirty in Belgium; thirteen in Italy; eight in Norway and Iceland (all martyrs).

Whoever stops to consider the remarkable growth of the Church in this New World, and besides this, in every colony of the British Empire, will be struck by the almost superhuman work done by the children of St. Patrick. Their well-known fidelity to the Faith is as manifest here, to-day, as a race, as it ever was in Ireland. Witness the churches, the schools, the convents, the monasteries, the colleges, the houses of charity for all the ills to which man is subject, and which they have erected out of their poverty, and tell me, if you cannot trace without difficulty their lineal and manifest descent from the early and first spiritual children of Ireland's great Saint?

Can I conclude in any more suitable way, therefore, than to express, with Gerald Griffin, the hope that

From her sleep of enchantment young Erin shall rise,
And again be the home of the holy and wise.

ON THE LAYING OF A CORNER-STONE

WE HAVE assembled here for a great and solemn purpose. I say a great and solemn object, for whatever concerns the welfare of man, no matter on what scale or to what extent, can be nothing else than momentous and important.

But the importance of that purpose grows when we remember that the ceremony which we have witnessed concerns not merely the individual, but society, that it has reference, not alone to time, but in its effects reaches far into eternity; that though performed by human means and with natural instruments, yet it belongs to the supernatural order. It is supernatural in its purpose, supernatural in its significance, supernatural in its effects.

We sometimes witness, or we hear or read, of the laying of the corner-stone of public buildings; but these buildings have reference to time, they are, perhaps, for the purpose of elevating man socially or intellectually, and sometimes while ostensibly for that object, they tend to destroy the supernatural order, and even natural religion, in the heart of man, thus loosening effectually the very bonds of society.

But I need not tell you that far different is the object of this day's ceremony. We have assembled to witness the solemn blessing and putting in its place of the chief corner-stone of a Christian temple, a house in which the Incarnate God may dwell, not alone as He did of old in the Temple, but really, truly, and substantially, even as He dwells at the right hand of the Father. Therefore is this solemn ceremony no vain or meaningless rite; therefore does it belong to the supernatural order; therefore does the Chief Pastor of this portion of the flock of Jesus Christ, clad in the symbolic vestments of his divine office, and bearing in his hand the staff of his pastoral authority, in the words of the Church's sacred liturgy, implore a blessing on that corner-

stone and put it in its place, signing it with the Sign of the Cross, the Sign of Redemption, the symbol of Christian mortification, the symbol of grace, and consequently, of everlasting glory.

It was placed in the name of the Father, who shall be adored and glorified within the walls of this new temple; in the name of the Son, the Word Incarnate, whose sacred blood shall flow anew mystically in the Sacraments and the adorable Sacrifice of the Mass; in the name of the Holy Ghost, who shall sanctify and enlighten those who come to seek His grace within those walls.

It was placed with the invocation of the saints, the servants of God, who illustrated the divine life of the Church militant, and now enjoy the Beatific Vision, that they by their prayers may draw down the blessing of the Most High on a work begun in His name.

Behold, then, we have performed an act of Faith, and entered a protest against the monstrous doctrines that would banish God from the world, and from among men, whom He made to His own image. We have made an act of Hope in the Redemption by Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to redeem *us*, and all mankind. We have elicited and performed an act of Charity, by founding and establishing, of our own means, a temple to the living God. Here, therefore, is a work and an act which has a supernatural signification.

But I said it is supernatural in its result and effects. That it is not only to benefit the individual, but society. And before I proceed to develop this point, I must express my sorrow that those who ought to know do not understand the meaning of these words. Were such the case, there would be no Socialistic theories, and the world to-day would not be shocked by the dangers which threaten society.

Within these walls, as within the precincts of every church in communion with the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Roman Church, men will learn to curb their passions, to carry the cross of poverty, humiliation, and affliction with Christian patience and resignation, realizing that this is a life of probation and exile, and while living here below to merit, by patience and suffering, according to the

model set before them by the Incarnate Son of God, a reward of which the world and the passions of men can never despoil them.

Yes, assuredly, never was there a time or an era when the influence of Christian teaching was more sadly or more generally needed than in the days through which we are passing.

For what do we behold? We behold empires, established only yesterday by military prowess and glory and on the universal sentiment of peoples, rocked to their centers to-day, and tottering, because of the mere human principles which they seek to establish. We behold nations blinded so far to their own welfare as to make religion subject to human caprice and to human law, thus trying to teach that man is superior to his Creator. The result of this can be nothing else than to throw man back upon himself, and make him think and feel that this world is his only happiness, and therefore he is entitled to all he can acquire of happiness here, no matter by what means.

We witness the doctrine of accomplished facts, and the destruction of right by brute force. We witness the corrupt habits of men, the suicides, the homicides, the murders, robberies, and other foul deeds of men, and for what reason? Because they discard the supernatural; because society, to a great extent, has lost its Christian conscience, and governs itself by laws and rules of merely human expediency and earthly benefit; because, in one word, of the absence of true religion.

What, I ask, is to save us, to save society, from this moral chasm which is yawning to engulf it? The same divinely appointed guide which rescued mankind in the days of pagan Rome from the Saturnalian orgies. The same beneficent means which saved Christian civilization from destruction in the days of the barbarity and outrage of the Goth, the Vandal, and the Mussulman.

Yes, I make the assertion that if society is to be saved from destruction, it must and shall be through the teaching and the ministerial agency of the one true Church.

The Church is the divinely constituted guide of society. The Church is the divinely appointed physician of the woes

and ills of the human race. And through and by her wisdom, and by the exercise of those healing powers which she has received from her divine Founder, she alone can apply a remedy and restore society to its normal state of moral health.

This may appear to some a bold assertion, but I know whereof I speak. I repeat it, and I prove it. When the Lord God gave their commission to the Apostles, He gave them that commission over all mankind without exception. He gave it to them in unlimited terms. He said to them, "Go forth, teach all nations," guide them on the way to heaven, "As the Father sent Me, I also send you." And again He told them they might expect contradiction, humiliations, sufferings; He told them men would continually persecute them for His sake; and that they may make no mistake as to the relation in which they stood and were to stand to the world, He said to them, "You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth."

Now, remember these words are not mine; they are not the words of a mortal man, they are not the words of any one who might be deceived or who could wish to deceive; they are the words of Incarnate Wisdom, the words of the Lord God, Jesus Christ.

Remember, moreover, that He never gave utterance to a useless, a frivolous, a meaningless or unnecessary word. These words, therefore, signify what they say: "You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth." They were to be the light of the world, because their doctrines were to enlighten the intellect of man, and save him from the shoals and quicksands of error. They were to be the salt of the earth because the agency of their ministry was to preserve the heart of man from corruption.

Therefore I repeat, the priestly office is for the society of the day and the Christian era what the pool of Siloe was to the blind and the lame and the infirm of every class, who came to bathe in its waters. The sooner the world at large recognizes this fact, proved, even from the pages of Christian history, the better for mankind.

How were they to be the light of the world? If they were and are in their successors to be the light of the world

and of mankind, then it necessarily follows that wherever their influence or the agency of their ministry does not reach, must be a prey to darkness. And of what kind is this darkness? The darkness, of course, of the human intellect; the darkness of false principles, and the teaching of error.

And what does history tell us in confirmation of this, or rather, in evidence? We need go no farther back than to passing events. Where is society threatened most at this moment in which I speak? When and where have men been groping in darkness most conspicuously? Where has the Socialist and the Communist reaped the richest harvest of followers, but where religion was persecuted, its Bishops and priests incarcerated, or its teachings abandoned? "Aye, sons of men, how long will you love vanity and seek after lies?"

"You are the salt of the earth." You possess the power of purifying society. You can heal its wounds, and restore it to health. Yes, in the blood of the Lord God, Jesus Christ, in the grace which flows through the veins of His mystic body, which is the Church, can society wash and be made clean.

Here is the source of conjugal chastity and fidelity, and the remedy for the divorce court. Here is the source of justice and charity to our neighbor. Here is the source of political fidelity and honor, and not the rules of party. Here, in a word, is the source of those qualities and characteristics which make men happy here below, and give them hope of a blessed immortality. The founding, the building, of every new Catholic church promotes within the sphere of its influence this blessed consummation.

Therefore, I would congratulate our Chief Pastor, who extends with such untiring care the influence of the Church, and opens so often, and widens, as it were, the channels of grace for his flock. I congratulate your Pastor, who comes to his work with the zeal and efficiency necessary to its perfect fulfilment. I wish and hope and pray that under his guidance this spiritual field may realize the name it bears; that it may become a field, rich in the bloom of grace and virtue, and dear to the Sacred Heart.

Last, but not least, I congratulate *you*, my dear people,

for the stone you have set up to-day. Like the stone on which Jacob slept on his way to Mesopotamia, and had visions of angels, truly will this be for you the house of God and the gate of heaven.

Here will you come to learn the doctrines of your holy religion; here will you learn to be meek, humble, resigned, and forbearing; here will you receive strength in trial, and counsel in doubt and difficulty; and when the heartlessness of the world will afflict you, you will imbibe from the Sacred Heart of the Lord, copious draughts of consolation, and the assurance that if you weep here, you shall one day rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you.

May this sacred edifice, begun under such happy auspices, be all this and more for you. May it be in very deed, the "house of God and the gate of heaven."

CLUB LIFE

THE hints or suggestions hereby offered on Club Life are entirely of a practical character, and therefore must be and will be very plain. They are not intended, by any means, to be a criticism; they are rather meant as a safeguard for the welfare of the Catholic Club, and to establish and convey through it the highest ethical and social principles in accordance with the teachings of our holy Mother, the Church.

First, then. Clubs seem to be somewhat of a necessity in our day. Clubs are springing up all over the country, and, in fact, all over the world. The old and the young seem to patronize them. There are clubs of almost every description, and for almost every purpose of life, politics, literature, amusement, recreation; clubs for women as well as for men.

It is not difficult to see, therefore, considering the tendency to Club Life, that there is danger in it which it is necessary to foresee and to be careful in avoiding.

The best gift of God to man, or of man to his fellow-man, may be turned into an instrument of harm. And as it is with Club Life, so it is with other matters. It has its advantages, no doubt, and especially in this age, when it seems to fill a want in social life, but it has its dangerous side also.

It will be the purpose of this paper to say what a Club should be in order to be of benefit to the community in which it exists. What should be its characteristics? And what are the dangers to be avoided by its members in order to render its existence in the community desirable?

A Club, I suppose, we all understand to be an association of persons banded together for some specific purpose, guided and governed by a constitution and rules and officers vol

tarily adopted and freely selected by the members themselves. That may define any Club.

Our Club is intended to be an association of Catholic gentlemen banded together, within the precincts of Catholic teaching and practice, for the purpose of cultivating and promoting those virtues, whether natural or supernatural, those sound ethical principles and habits which save society from decay, and really make life worth living.

If this Club should fall short of this standard, it really would miss its aim and would not deserve to live. Consequently, it is the duty of every member to see that, so far as he is concerned individually, he will not have to reproach himself with contributing to its injury.

I said it is an association of Catholic *gentlemen*. Gentlemen, you are aware, as well as I am, that every individual of the male sex in this country expects to be denominated a *gentleman*, just as every female requires to be styled a lady.

It would be most desirable if the term in every case could be applied with propriety and accuracy, but you are very well aware that such is not the case. And such, in the very nature of things, cannot be the case. We must, to be candid and sincere, admit that some men are not gentlemen, just as we must admit that some women are not gentlewomen, or, if you like the term better, ladies; while, at the same time, all may aspire to and succeed in attaining to that standard of cultured life which classifies them as we have said above.

But let us confine our remarks to our side of the house. What is a gentleman? What is a Catholic gentleman? What are his characteristics?

It is not quite easy to answer these questions, or at least the first one, satisfactorily. It is difficult to give a strict technical definition. We know perhaps practically and in concrete human form what a gentleman is; we know him by acquaintance, by his manners, and deportment; by his habits, by his demeanor toward others, and by his general life and conduct; but we can scarcely define the term. Let us therefore try to describe him by saying as accurately as we can what he is, and what he is not.

The word "gentleman" is a compound of two words which

very plainly indicate their own meaning. These words are, as you, no doubt, have already observed, "gentle" and "man."

A gentleman, therefore, is a man who is gentle, refined, well-bred, cultured, meek, mild, and adorned with all those qualities which, by instinct almost, we look for in the best and highest example of our race. A gentleman is so called in order to distinguish him from the savage, the barbarian, the semi-barbarian. He is so called in order to show that he has not the qualities that we expect to find in the nomads and in the wild tribes and races that never knew civilization or refinement, either as it has appeared in pagan or Christian times.

Now, the special qualities and characteristics which distinguish the savage, the barbarian, and semi-civilized from the man who has the good fortune to be born under the influence and within the sphere of civilization, are a love of warfare, a special aptitude and desire for physical prowess. The savage and the barbarian develop entirely their bodily strength, to the almost utter neglect of their mental qualities. Restraint of passion is almost unknown among them. The forgiveness of injury or wrong is scarcely to be expected from them. Though they occasionally have crude notions of honor, as a general rule they are without honor, without truthfulness, morose, given to revenge, to quarrelling, to selfishness, to greed. Their manners and customs are the most primitive, the roughest and most shocking and disgusting. Their dress is scarcely an object of consideration—in fact, in the generality of countries inhabited by them, it is no object at all!

Neither is cleanliness much considered, nor are any of the proprieties which make life pleasant among us, and among civilized nations and races generally.

Such, gentlemen, is the barbarian, the savage. Such is man without civilization, and living merely the animal life.

Now, in proportion to how a man advances and frees himself from these environments of which I have spoken, in the same exact ratio he is a gentleman. If he has freed himself only a little, or if he differs only a little in his

manners and in his habits and customs from the barbarian, of course he must be said to be only a little removed from him, and therefore very little of a gentleman.

If he is fierce, quarrelsome, careless about his personal appearance, negligent of his dress, prone to anger, vile in his language, rough and inconsiderate of others in his actions and conduct, certainly he cannot claim to be far removed from the primitive state, and consequently he must be very near the state of the barbarian and the savage.

Now, gentlemen, you will please bear in mind, as I have already said, that this paper is and contains nothing more than a dissertation and an argument. I desire to put before you in a proper, and in as lucid and clear a way as I can, the reasons why every man should aspire to be a gentleman.

I said, I think, that the less any man cultivates the rough material of human nature which he received at his first moment of being, the less of a gentleman will he necessarily be. And conversely, the more he cultivates that material, the more he brings under subjection the natural passions and promptings of nature, the more of a gentleman will he be.

This is what is meant by being *well-bred*. We mean that a man, during his youth, and in the years of his education, has been taught to restrain his natural inclinations, to curb his passions, and to show forth in his life and conduct habits that render him amiable and attractive to others.

We all know instinctively a well-bred man, and we could be brought to acknowledge in our hearts that a man is well-bred when his conduct is in keeping with the ideas which we instinctively, almost, have, of what a gentleman ought to be. He must be, in a few words, the very opposite and extreme of the savage and barbarian. For, remember, it is not the name, it is what the name signifies, which makes it undesirable to be a savage or barbarian.

Consequently, a man to be a gentleman must be gentle; he must be mild, meek. This does not mean that he must not be brave, courageous, and strong. No, it means that he must not be a fierce, quarrelsome, sulky, selfish, angrily-disposed man. He must be considerate of others; of their wishes and their tastes. He must be thoroughly cleanly both

in his person, in his language and in his habits. He must try to make himself acquainted with the best customs and conventional habits of good society in his every-day life. And here, gentlemen, let me say that he would be a very poor specimen of a gentleman who, while he aims at and endeavors to possess the characteristics of a gentleman among strangers, neglects the common and well-known and justly expected courtesies toward his own immediate family and relatives. A man who treats his fellow-members of the Club, or any other such person well, and displays the manners of a gentleman in their presence, but behaves in a very opposite way toward his parents or his wife or the other members of his family, cannot be considered as having a just claim to the distinction of being a well-bred man.

From what I have said, you will readily admit, if you have followed me closely, that the highest type of gentleman is the Christian gentleman. No doubt there were gentlemen in the world before the Christian era at all. There were pagan men, and men who lived under the Jewish law, as also men who had very little law except what God gave them in their hearts, and who, nevertheless, came up to the requirements of a gentleman's life, as it was understood under those civilizations.

Even the pagan Greeks and Romans aspired to the overcoming of the natural propensities, at least some among them. And their ethical character, as well as that of the Jews, was remarkable for the stringent laws with which it was surrounded.

But, gentlemen, only in the Christian religion is a man thoroughly trained to and aided in governing his natural passions and refining them, and this from the highest and most powerful motives. Hence the saints in our Christian calendar were the most perfect types of gentleman and woman which the world has ever known, or ever can know.

But what wonder is it, gentlemen, after all? Who has ever set so high a type of refinement, culture, meekness, gracious modesty, gentleness, and every beautiful trait and feature of character which makes men attractive and admirable, as the Man-God, who in this, as in everything else, should be and is our model? He was mild, but who was

more courageous? He forgave injuries, but He never compromised with wrong. He was the essence of mercy, but He gave Himself freely to die. And after Him, if you read the lives of those who conspicuously followed Him in their lives, you shall find that they were the highest type of the Christian gentleman.

From what I have said you will also conclude that in order to be a gentleman in the true sense of the word, it is not necessary to be a great scholar, or man of letters, though that is, indeed, a very desirable thing. Nor is it necessary to be wealthy or born to wealth, though this also, if properly used, is of advantage. We can all be gentlemen, in the true sense, if we cultivate those virtues and tastes and habits which I have indicated.

MUSIC

AN ELABORATE treatment of the theory of music would require the knowledge of a professor skilled in that exquisite art, and that I cannot claim to be. Consequently, my limits are necessarily very circumscribed. The words which I shall say to you will have reference solely to what I shall name the philosophy of music or the use of music—the part or place which it takes as a factor in the education and in the civilization of mankind.

Although it is only within the last few hundred years that music can be said to have approached anything like completeness, or to have been governed by regularly defined rules, like a science, yet the world and man have never been without it in some shape. Almighty God so made nature as that man could extract from it, even in its primeval state, the germs of song and the notes of music. Therefore the poet says, “There is a song in the purling brook, a voice in every whispering wind.” We know that the harp and cymbal and organ were not unknown in the days of David, as we know that before him the Hebrew people in captivity, because of their bitter exile, hung their harps on the willow boughs which grew by the Babylonian rivers, and refused to cheer themselves with the songs of their race.

Music, therefore, had always some share in the education of man. But what is music?

Music is a procession of rhythmical (or melodious) and harmonious sounds. It is the harmonious arrangement of different melodious sounds, as poetry is the rhythmical arrangement of expressed thought. Music, therefore, is to sound what poetry is to expressed thought or words; what uniformity is to action.

All are expressive of order. Music and poetry express

order so perfectly that the gods of the pagans were supposed to hold direct intercourse with poets, and to inspire them when they wrote.

As to its effect upon the soul, it acts more potently than any other form of expression or appeal, even far more than oratory, which, like itself, addresses the soul directly, and affects it with mysterious power. Indeed, so powerful is its natural influence that men were said to be drawn irresistibly into the vortex of death by the enchanting notes of the fabled siren.

I said that music is an expression of order, and a very perfect expression of order. And the more perfectly it expresses order, the better music it is. In fact, whatever expresses order has somewhat of music or poetry in it. Therefore, Nature itself is called a poem, because of the regularity of the laws which govern it. And this regularity calls up in our mind a striking picture of systematic and measured arrangement. Therefore, the movements of a well-disciplined army are called a poem, because of the precision and regularity with which these movements are made.

And ascending higher to that abode where order is supreme and everlasting, Holy Writ tells us that the angelic choirs and the spirits of the just made perfect express that order in hymns of perpetual praise to God.

We see, then, that music is the language of the soul. Being so, it must necessarily express all the emotions of the soul. Therefore, Joy and Sorrow and Love and Hatred, Courage, and Fear, in a word, every emotion of which the soul is capable, must find its expression through it. Now, every one knows that there are various emotions, some spiritual, noble, high, divine, almost; others are sensuous, ignoble, debasing, and almost Satanic. Music can express all these, and, sad to say, very frequently is made the medium of the second class, quite as often perhaps as of the first.

To say this is to say that Music should be the handmaid of religion, and following religion, it becomes a most valuable factor in the promotion of human happiness.

For this reason the Catholic Church keeps constant watch and ward over it. Indeed, she is the Mother of Music, prop-

erly so called. While she has been the careful foster-mother of the other fine arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, her influence, instead of checking their growth or development, only tends to advance them. She proposes to them objects so vast that their energies can be limitless. Hence under her guidance they have attained their highest excellence.

Painting: What subjects have ever delighted the painter's eye equal to those which are born of Christianity? For example, The Holy Family, the Last Supper, The Taking Down from the Cross, The Transfiguration.

What pieces of sculpture are superior to those of Michael Angelo? What grander or more glorious work of architecture than the old minsters, the Christian cathedrals and temples, built during the ages of Faith to the worship of God? In those ages, the "Dark Ages" as they are named sometimes, cathedrals were built beside which the grand New York Cathedral would be only a pretty miniature.

I said Music is the offspring of the Church. Very little was known of it, except in a crude form, until she took it in hand, and through the genius of her monks first reduced it to something like a science. From the very beginning she has given it a high place in her Divine Offices, and consecrated its use by employing it in the sublime act of the Christian Sacrifice.

But what shall I say of Music in its relation to individual and domestic, as well as to social and religious life? Music is employed to calm the troubled spirit, to soothe the aching heart, to stir up the valor of the brave, to arouse the tenderest affections of the soul.

The general leads his army to battle with the sound of the fife and the clarionet, or the beat of the drum. The mother hangs over the cradle of her babe, and rocks it to sleep to the tender notes of the lullaby.

The mother, taught by nature's hand,
Her child while weeping,
Will lull to sleeping
With some sweet song of her native land.

The festivals of the young are enlivened with song; the banquet-hall would be cheerless without music; life is begun

with its joyous notes; and over the remains of the dead we chant in solemn tones the words of the Christian Requiem.

Thus the routine of life is blessed and made happy with Music; and in the public worship of God what more glorious part than that which it occupies? Who has ever heard anything which inspires with higher or holier thoughts, or more exalted ideas of the Deity than Mozart's Mass, or Haydn's sacred compositions? What can move to tears of sorrow more deeply than the sad notes of Rossini's "Stabat Mater," or to more salutary fear than the awful tones of the "Dies Iræ" by the old Franciscan monk?

The birth of the Son of God was accompanied with angelic song, and sacred tradition tells us that the Virgin Mother of the Redeemer was assumed into heaven accompanied with the songs of the same heavenly choir. No wonder that the poet of our race and nation has said of Music:

When through life unblest we rove,
Losing all that makes life dear,
Should some notes we used to love
In days of boyhood, meet our ear,
Oh! How welcome breathes the strain!
Wakening thoughts that long have slept,
Kindling former smiles again
In faded eyes that long have wept.

Like some gale that sighs along
Beds of Oriental flowers,
Is the pleasing breath of Song
That Music breathes in happier hours.
Filled with balm the gale sighs on,
While the flowers are lost in death;
So, when pleasure's dream is gone
Its memory lives in Music's breath.

Music—oh, how faint, how weak,
Language fades before thy spell,
Why should feeling ever speak,
When thou canst breathe its soul so well?
Friendship's balmy words may feign,
Love's are e'en more false than they,
Oh! 'tis only music's strain
Can sweetly soothe and not betray.

LIBLIOTHEC
PROV. TROV. MAE
STUDENDATUS

TRANSFERRED

BX 1756 .H635 S4 1915

SMC

Hogan, Thaddeus, d.

1918.

Sermons doctrinal and
moral.

AWZ-7870 (awsk)

